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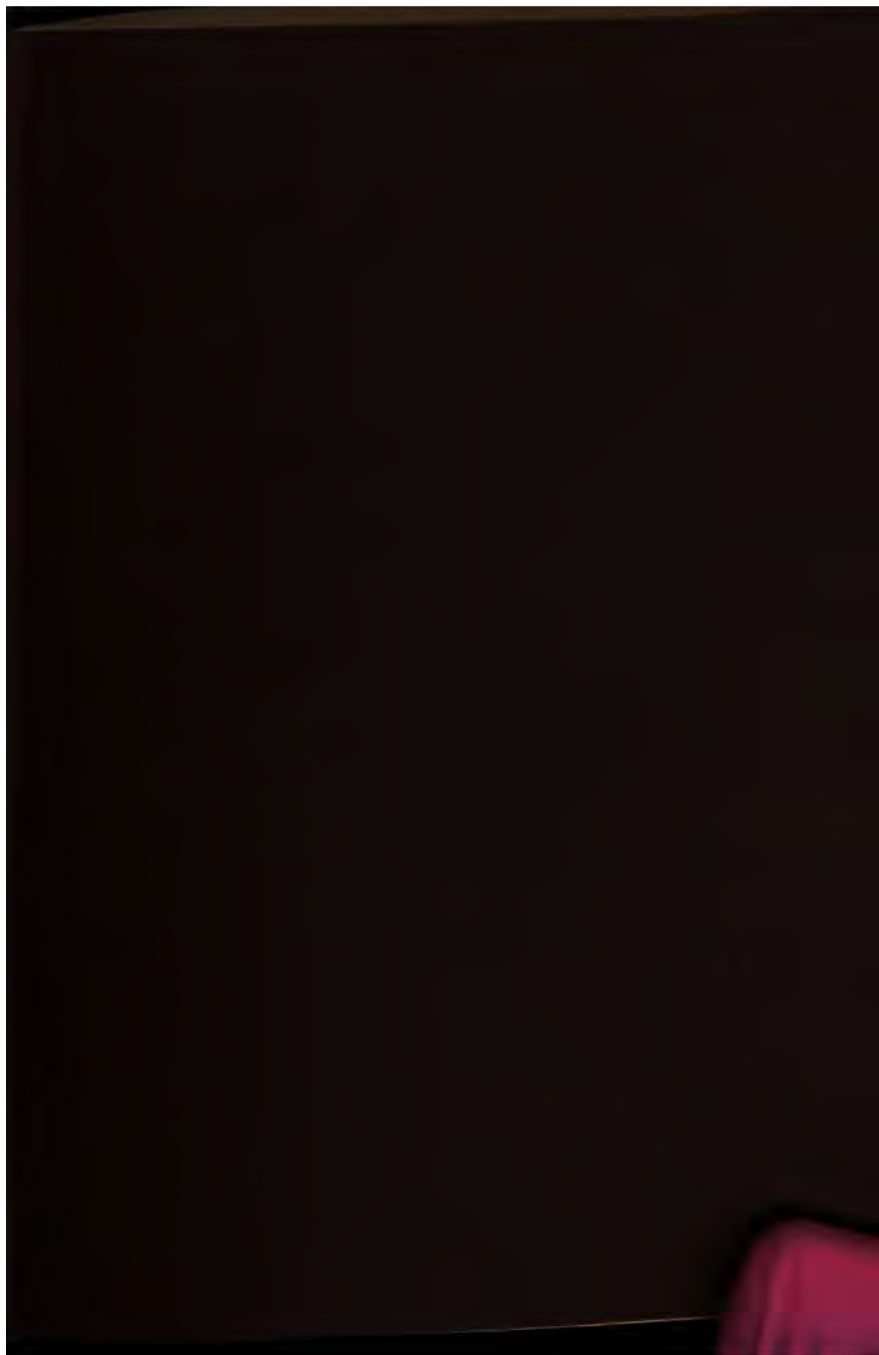
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A SERIES OF BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES, INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE
THE ANNALS, CHARACTER, TEACHING, AND INFLUENCE
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BY
W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS,
AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH PARTY LEADERS," "THE BIRD WORLD," "THE ARCTIC
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BOOK I.
STATESMEN.



S. ANSELM.
THOMAS BECKET.
STEPHEN LANGTON.
WILLIAM LAUD.

S. ANSELM, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A.D. 1033—1109.

AT Aosta, an old Roman city, cradled in the shadow of the snow-capped Alps, Anselm, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was born, in or about 1033. His father, Gundulf, was of Lombard descent; his mother, Eunenberga, was of the family of the counts of Maurienne. Few particulars of his early years have come down to us; but we know that he imbibed the truths of religion from the lips of a pious mother, and that a thoughtful and devout nature inclined him, even in his childhood, to seek the repose and leisure of a monastic life. Bred up among the mountains, with their grand forms towering constantly upon his gaze, and their mysterious voices sounding constantly in his ears, we may reasonably imagine that they helped to develop in him the contemplative and reflective faculties which made up so large a portion of his genius. It is true that no direct trace of their influence can be found in his works. We are not aware that any illustration borrowed from the various aspects of their scenery

ever suggested itself to his mind. And yet it is not altogether fanciful to imagine that the serenity impressed upon every page of S. Anselm's writings was due to the effect upon his earnest temperament of the majestic calm of the mighty peaks inclosing and dominating over the Aosta valley.

Like all the heroes of monkish biographers, young Anselm had his dreams, and dreams prophetic of his future career. While yet a little child, says Eadmer, he was wont to listen gladly, so far as he was able, to his mother's conversation; and having learned from her that one Almighty God in heaven above ruled over all things, and contained all things, he imagined, as was natural to a boy living among the Alpine heights, that heaven rested upon the mountains, and that the path to the palace of God ascended their lofty precipices. His thoughts dwelt much upon this; and it came to pass that, one night, he dreamed that he ought to climb to the mountain summit, and hasten to the palace of God, the Great King. Before he began the ascent he saw in the plain at the foot of the mountains some women reaping corn, and he knew that they were the King's maidens. As they did their work very negligently and idly, he rebuked them, and resolved that he would accuse them before the Lord the King. So, having made his way to the mountain-top, he entered the celestial palace, where he found the Lord, with none but His chief butler, all the household having been sent to gather in the harvest. And the Lord called him, and he approached, and sat at His feet.

Then, with bountiful graciousness, the Lord inquired of him who he was, and whence he came, and what he wanted. And Anselm, replying, spake the truth. Then the Lord commanded the chief butler to set before him the whitest bread; and in the Lord's presence he ate, and was refreshed. Therefore, in the morning, when he recounted all that the eyes of his mind had seen, he believed, with childish simplicity, that he had really been in heaven, and partaken of the bread of the Lord; and this he declared before everybody.

He was not yet fifteen when he began to consider how he might best live the life of a servant of God, and he came to the only conclusion possible for devout minds in that age of unrest and strife, that no other way was so good as that of the pious monks. To an abbot, with whom he had some acquaintance, he wrote accordingly, and asked that he might be made a monk; but the abbot refused when he learned that the application was not sanctioned by Anselm's father. The lad then prayed that he might be seized with illness, so that his father's opposition to his cherished project might be overcome. But though he fell sick, as he desired, his father's mood was not altered, and the abbot still declined to receive him. As he recovered his health, his high-wrought enthusiasm not unnaturally declined, and he began to realize that the world was not without its pleasant things for youth. Even his books were put aside for merry company, and, after his mother's death, he plunged completely into the pastimes and

occupations of the world. It was fortunate for him, as his biographer suggests, that the harshness of his father drove him from his home, and severed the ties that might otherwise have involved him in ruin. With a single clerk for his attendant, he accomplished the difficult passage of Mont Cenis, and entered France. Here he spent several months in the valley of the Saône and the Rhone. Then he visited Paris and Orleans. The desire of knowledge reviving in his breast, he repaired to Avranches, where Lanfranc had taught with skill and success; and afterwards he followed in the steps of that renowned teacher to the newly-established monastery of Bec, which he was already elevating to a foremost position among the schools and religious houses of the time.

The Abbey of Bec, so named from a *beck*, or rivulet, which washed its walls, was situated in a beautiful wooded valley near Brionne, in Normandy.*

* "A wooded hill divides the valley of the Risle, with the town and castle of Brionne, from another valley watered by a small stream, or in the old Teutonic speech of the Normans, a *beck*. That stream gives its name to the most famous of Norman religious houses, and to this day the name of Bec is never uttered to denote that spot without the distinguishing addition of the name of Herlwin. The hills are still thickly wooded; the beck still flows through rich meadows and under trees planted by the water-side, by the walls of what was once the renowned monastery to which it gives its name. But of the days of Herlwin no trace remains besides these imperishable works of nature. A tall tower, of rich and fanciful design, one of the latest works of mediæval skill, still attracts the traveller from a distance; but of the mighty minster itself, all traces, save a few small fragments, have

Its founder was Herlwin, one of Duke Robert's bravest knights, whom a deep sense of the vanity of life induced to discard his hauberk and cuirass, and devote himself to pious works. He first planted his house on his patrimonial estate at Bonneville, digging the foundations with his own hands, carrying away the rubbish, and on his own broad shoulders fetching the sand, lime, and stones. This was his labour by day; at night he learned his letters, and taught himself to read the Psalter. In 1034, he was made a monk by the Bishop of Lisieux; in 1037, ordained to the priesthood, and placed at the head of the new community, which he ruled very strictly, after the manner of Columba's monastery, at Iona. "Laborare est orare," or rather, "Laborare *et* orare," was his watchword. The monks worked hard all day: some cleared the land of thorns and brambles; others brought manure and spread it abroad. They toiled and they saved; none ate their bread in idleness; and at each hour of prayer they gathered in the church for divine service.

perished. The monastic buildings, like those of so many other monasteries in Normandy and elsewhere in Gaul, have been rebuilt in the worst days of art, and they are now applied to the degrading purpose of a receptacle of French cavalry. The gateway also remains, but it is, like the rest of the buildings, of a date far later than the days of Herlwin. The finest memorial of that illustrious abbey is now to be found in the parish church of the neighbouring village. In that lowly shelter is still preserved the effigy with which after-times had marked the resting-place of the founder. Such are all the traces which now remain of the house which once owned Lanfranc and Anselm as its inmates."—E. A. Freeman, "History of the Norman Conquest."

The new house being burned down, Herlwin, nothing dismayed, removed to another site, on the bank of the Beck. "It was a haunt of game. There were only the buildings of three mills, and but a limited area of habitable ground. What, then, should he do? In one of the mills he had no interest, and only a third part in the others, and there was not enough free space for his monastery. He put his trust in God. He began to work, and it was clear that God worked with him; for his co-proprietors and neighbours, either by sale or free gift, gave up to him each his portion; and in time he acquired the whole wood of Brionne round about." So the church was built, and the cloister; and Herlwin's new house flourished. But though great as a founder, he was no teacher; and Bec would probably have pursued an undistinguished career, but for the accidental coming of the great Lombard scholar, Lanfranc. The abbot chanced, when he came, to be working busily at the construction of an oven. Lanfranc, advancing, said, "God save you!" "God bless you!" replied the abbot. "Are you a Lombard?" "I am," said Lanfranc. "What do you want?" "To become a monk." Thereupon the abbot bade a monk, named Royer, show Lanfranc the Book of the Rule, which he read, and afterwards declared that, with God's help, he would gladly observe it. Herlwin, hearing this, and knowing who he was and whence he came, granted him what he desired. And he, falling down at the oven-mouth, kissed the abbot's feet.

Bec soon became a school of great repute, "a centre of thought and culture for Western Christendom." The fame of the learning of Lanfranc drew thither young men from every civilized country; and as a necessary consequence, immense wealth flowed into its coffers. But it is not with Bec we have to do; enough to say that it was at the climax of its influence when Anselm became one of its alumni. With the greatest eagerness he profited by the wise and subtle teaching of the Italian professor; and soon he was entrusted with the teaching of others. The two men were attracted towards each other by a common sympathy; bound together by a common object, that of educating and elevating the bold, arrogant, ambitious Norman race. They became firm friends; for one was the complement of the other, and found in the other what he himself wanted. They were sufficiently unlike in character, though alike in aim and purpose, to form a real and lasting fellowship. After a while, Anselm began to ask himself what should be his part in life, to what use should he devote his acquirements. He consulted Lanfranc, and Lanfranc referred him to the Archbishop of Rouen, whose counsel was that he should become a monk. In those days it was difficult for a man of scholarly tastes and religious aspirations to be anything else. So, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, Anselm assumed the tonsure at Bec (A.D. 1060). Three years later he succeeded Lanfranc as prior. He was forty-five years old when, on the death of Herlwin, he was appointed abbot;

and for fifteen years he ruled the monastery with a success not inferior to that of Lanfranc himself (A.D. 1078-1093).

In the silence and security of Bec he was able to abandon himself completely to the studies his soul loved, and to pursue those philosophical and theological researches which deservedly place him at the head of the thinkers and inquirers of his time. The boldness of his speculative faculty was not less astonishing than the mighty grasp of his intellect. He did not hesitate to attempt the solution of the darkest and most unusual problems concerning the Divine Nature and the Christian faith, which lay hid and shrouded in much obscurity, in the Holy Scriptures. For such was the confidence he had in them, that with unshaken trust of heart he felt assured they would reveal nothing contrary to the solid truth. Therefore he addressed himself most earnestly to this object; that, according to his faith, it might be vouchsafed to his mind and reason to discern the things veiled in them.*

The first fruits of his persevering studies were three dialogues on Truth, and Free Will, and Sin, which exhibit all his characteristic subtlety of thought and cogent grasp of reasoning; but are deficient in clearness of exposition. The full force of his genius was reserved for the two famous treatises, the "Monologion" and the "Proslogion," which still hold so high a place in the literature of religious metaphysics. Each is but a brief manual

* Cf. for these and other statements, Eadmer's "Vita Anselmi."

of a few pages; yet each is a masterpiece of philosophical investigation. There is no waste of words, and no diffusion of the argument. In Anselm's days men did not seek to outvie one another in beating out the smallest possible quantity of gold to cover the greatest possible area of surface. In method and matter both books resemble the "Analogy" of Butler; they belong to the same small group of supremely thoughtful works. The "Monologion" attempts, in plain language, by ordinary arguments, and without resort to learned proofs, to elucidate the idea of God from the necessity of reason. It demonstrates the existence of a Supreme Power from the existence of certain moral and intellectual qualities in man, which pre-suppose the same qualities, only in a perfect and transcendental form, in a Being "who is sure, on further reflection, to be the One without whom nothing could be, and who Himself depends on nothing."*

The "Monologion" did not satisfy its author, nor indeed, is it complete or satisfactory in itself. It

* "The clear purpose and the confident grasp of the question, the conduct of the reasoning from step to step, calm and almost impassive in appearance, but sustained and spirited; the terse yet elaborate handling of the successive periods, the union in it of self-reliant hardihood, with a strong sense of what is due to the judgment of others, make it, with its companion-piece worthy of its fame, as one of the great masterpieces and signal-posts in the development of this line of thought; though, like its great companions and rivals, before and after, it leaves behind a far stronger impression of the limitations of the human intellect than even of its powers."—Dean Church, "S. Anselm," pp. 75, 76.

needs a supplement. This was keenly felt by Anselm, whom Eadmer represents as anxiously seeking after some brief, simple, and self-contained argument, *totus, teres, atque rotundus*, which without assistance from Revelation, or from the evidence of design, would demonstrate clearly and intelligibly the existence and perfections of a Creator. So overmastering was the great thinker's anxiety that he was frequently unable to sleep or to take his meals. It clouded his thoughts, perturbed his prayers, interposed its shadow between him and his daily duties. What he had sought with cruel torment of the spirit and anguish of the mind came to him at last, suddenly, in the night-watch, flashing upon him like a vision from on high. He proceeded to record the discovery on his wax tablets; but, strange to say, they were mysteriously broken, and this occurred again and again before Anselm could work out his ideas, and inscribe them upon parchment. The result was the "Proslogion," the argument of which contends, that the fact that the human mind could conceive the idea of God is a proof of the reality of that idea.

While employing his profound intellect in these colossal speculations, Anselm did not neglect his avocation as a teacher; an avocation in which he greatly delighted, and in which, therefore, he supremely excelled. To light up a young mind with the fire of a noble purpose, to awaken in it a consciousness of its responsibilities and opportunities, to accustom it to high thoughts and pure

ideals, was to Anselm a source of the deepest pleasure. He was fond of comparing the age of youth to wax rightly tempered for the seal. If the wax be too hard or too soft the impression made upon it will necessarily be imperfect. So is it with the mind of man. If from childhood to old age it has been busy with the things of this world, the wax will be hardened. In vain may you seek to imprint upon it the things of the spirit, the chastened images of divine contemplation ; it cannot receive them. You might as well breathe sweet music into the ear of the deaf. On the other hand, take a boy of tender years, scarcely able to discern good from evil, or even to understand you when you speak of them ; and the wax is too soft and ductile. It will not hold the impression any more than the sand retains the outline of a passing foot. But between the two comes happy youth, with its double power, receptive and retentive ; happy youth which can not only receive but hold an impression. Train up the young man carefully, and you may mould him as you will. It is no marvel that a teacher with such wise views of education ; a teacher so richly gifted with keen sympathies, warm affections, and rare intellectual powers ; should have drawn around him a circle of devoted disciples.

Never was there a busier man than Anselm, Abbot of Bec, except, indeed, Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury. To have accomplished all that we know he *did* accomplish, not only must his industry have been as great as his self-devotion, not only

must his energy have been as inexhaustible as his capacity of loving, but he must have been a wonderful economist of his time. To compose homilies in Latin for the edification of his monks; to correspond with all people on all subjects, giving as much thought and care to the wants of the little as to the requests of the great; to preach to the laity in their own language, and on any occasion; to nurse a sick brother in the infirmary, or soothe his last hours with tender words; to devote himself unweariedly to his scholars and his monks, his servants and retainers; and to find time for much prayer, much meditation, and elaborate composition; this was the daily method of Abbot Anselm's laborious life. At times he felt its pressure, and on one occasion repaired to the Archbishop of Rouen, with a request that he might be relieved of it. Those were not days, however, when a man like Anselm could be spared; and as soon as he was so informed, he returned contentedly to his burden. "He behaved," says Eadmer, "in such wise, with such patience, gentleness, and lovingness, that all men looked upon him as upon their father. How many, whose recovery from sickness had been pronounced hopeless, did he restore by his tender vigilance! What was he not to Hereward, in his helpless old age, when disabled by years as well as by grievous maladies, he had lost all power in his body, and was fed by the abbot's hand, and refreshed by wine squeezed from the grapes into his other hand, from which he drank it, and at length was brought back

to health! Day by day he visited the infirmary, inquiring after the brethren's ailments, and giving to each what he needed, without trouble or delay. To those in health he was a father, to the sick a mother; or, rather, to both healthy and sick, he was at once father and mother."

Eadmer furnishes us with a pleasant example of the manner in which Anselm dealt with his younger scholars, and the mingled sympathy and earnestness by which he secured their confidence. An abbot, a man esteemed highly for his piety, was one day lamenting to him that no wholesome impression could be made on the youth brought up in his monastery. Do what he would, they remained incorrigible and wayward. He spared not the rod day or night; yet they only became worse.

"And you do not withhold your stripes?" said Anselm. "Well, what of these lads when they grow into young men?"

"They turn out dull and brutal," replied the abbot.

"Then, surely, you derive little benefit from your training, if it only turn men into beasts."

"But, what else can we do with them? In all ways we compel them to improve, and yet our labour is useless."

"*Compel* them!" exclaimed Anselm. "Tell me, my lord abbot, if you planted a tree in your garden, and bound it on every side so that it could not put forth its branches, what kind of tree would it prove, when, after some years, you allowed it space to spread? Would it not be good for nothing, with

boughs all tangled and crooked? And whose fault would this be but yours, who had put such constant compulsion upon it? And this is just what you do with your boys. You plant them in the garden of the Church, that they may grow and bear fruit to the Lord. But you fetter them to such an extent with menaces and terrors and blows, as to debar them completely from the enjoyment of any freedom. And being thus unwisely restrained, they collect in their minds wild thoughts intertangled like thorns; these they foster and feed, and with sullen temper elude everything that might set them right. Hence comes it that they see nothing in you of love or kindness, of goodwill or tenderness, towards them; they cannot believe that you study their well being; they ascribe all your actions to dislike and ill-temper. Hatred and suspicion grow with them as they grow; and they wander about with downcast eyes, ashamed or afraid to look you in the face. But tell me, for the love of God, why are you so harsh with them? Are they not human beings? Are they not of the same nature as yourself? You seek by blows and stripes to fashion them to good; did you ever see a craftsman fashion a fair image out of a plate of gold or silver by blows alone? Does he not with his tools now press and strike it tenderly, now with wise skill raise and shape it still more tenderly? And so, if you would mould your boys to good, you must, along with the stripes that bow them down, employ the fatherly kindness and gentleness that will lift them up."

The abbot endeavoured to excuse himself by the plea that his object was to force them into seriousness and steadfastness of character. Anselm replied: "An excellent object; but if you give an infant solid food, you will choke it. Every soul must have its proper diet. The strong delight in strong meat, in patience and tribulation, in not wishing for what is another's, in offering the other cheek, in praying for their enemies, in loving those who hate them. The weak and tender in God's service must be fed with milk; gentleness from others, kindness, mercy, cheerful encouragement, charitable forbearance. If you will in this way adapt yourselves both to your weak and your strong, you shall, by God's grace, so far as lies in you, win them all to God."

"Alas!" sighed the abbot, "we have been all wrong. We have wandered from the path of truth, and the light of discretion hath not shone upon us." And kneeling at Anselm's feet he confessed his error, asked pardon for past wrong-doing, and promised amendment in the future.

To us, and we doubt not to the reader, there is something indescribably beautiful in this revelation of the Christian graces, the loving nature, the kindly wisdom of the great philosophical thinker, who could turn from the lofty heights of the "Monologion" and the "Proslogion," to study the character of his young disciples, and guide their feeble feet into the ways of peace.*

* "We may trace in such records that remarkable combination of qualities which ultimately made Anselm the object of a love

In 1078, the year in which Anselm was made abbot, he visited England, to renew his acquaintance with Archbishop Lanfranc, and to inspect certain estates that had been gifted to his prosperous monastery. At Canterbury he was warmly welcomed by the monks; and it was there that Eadmer, then a guest, first saw him, and learned to love and admire him. Love and admiration, indeed, Anselm seems to have instinctively called forth in all who came in contact with him; and it is not to be wondered at that these feelings thrived vigorously in English breasts, inasmuch as Anselm did his utmost to subdue the strong Norman prejudices of the Lombard, whom King William had seated on the archiepiscopal throne of S. Augustine. His visit to England was several times repeated, and he went from monastery to monastery, and castle to castle, everywhere a welcome and an honoured guest. "To all," says Eadmer, "he was pleasant and cheerful, and the ways of each, so far as he could do it without sin, he took upon himself. For, according to the Apostle's word, he adapted himself to them who were without law, as if he had been without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ; that he might gain those who were not only and reverence surpassing even the admiration excited by his rare genius. What is striking is that with so much of his age, so powerful and severe in mind, so stern in his individual life, a monk of the monks, a dogmatist of the dogmatists, he yet had so much beyond his age; he was not only so gentle and affectionate and self-forgetting, but he was so considerate, so indulgent, so humane, so free-spirited, so natural."—Dean Church, "S. Anselm," p. 86.

without the law, but without Christ, as it was thought of S. Benedict, who also lived, devoted to a worldly life, in many things without the law of Christ. So it happened that hearts were drawn in a wonderful manner towards him, and filled with hungry eagerness to hear him. For he adapted his speech to each order of men, so that his hearers declared that nothing could have been more appropriate to their ways. To monks, to clerks, to laymen, according to each man's pursuit, he addressed his words. There was no count in England, nor countess, nor great personage, who did not believe that they had lost merit in the sight of God, if it had not chanced to them at that time to have done some service to Anselm, the Abbot of Bec."

In 1088, the year after the accession of William Rufus to the throne which the genius of his father had won and secured, died his father's wisest and most trusted counsellor, Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. Instead of immediately filling up this important see, William seized its possessions, and appropriated its revenues to his own use. He made a small allowance to the monks who celebrated divine service in the great cathedral; but the remainder he let at a high rent, which was paid into his own treasury. He literally put up the Church of Christ to sale; giving the power of lordship over it to any one who, with whatever injury to it, would bid the highest price. For four successive years a new rent was annually exacted. The king would allow no bargain to remain settled, but whoever promised more ousted him who

was paying less, except the former tenant, giving up his original bargain, voluntarily rose to the offer of the later bidder. "You might daily see," says Eadmer, who, as a monk of Canterbury, speaks from personal knowledge, "the most worthless men on their errand of collecting money for the king, stalking about the cloisters of the monastery, regardless of the religious rule of God's servants, and, with fierce menacing looks, issuing their commands to everybody: lavishing threats, lording it over every one, and straining their power to the uttermost. The scandals, quarrels, and irregularities that thence arose, I hate," exclaims Eadmer, "to remember! At the beginning of the evil some of the monks of the Church were sent to other religious houses, but those who remained suffered many tribulations and indignities. What shall I say of the tenants of the Church, ground down by oppression and misery; so that I might almost doubt, but for the evils which ensued, whether with bare life they would have been more harshly treated? Nor was this state of things confined to Canterbury. The same savage cruelty prevailed in all her daughter Churches in England, which, when bishop or abbot died, at that time wore the garb of widowhood. And this king was the first who wrought so dreadful an oppression upon the Church of God. He had inherited no such rule of conduct from his father. He alone, when the Churches were vacant, kept them in his own hands. And thus, wherever you turned your eye, wretchedness was before you: and this wretchedness for

nearly five years rested upon the Church of Canterbury, always increasing, always, as time went on, growing cruel and evil."

It happened that in 1092, Hugh of Avranches, Earl of Chester, invited his old friend, the Abbot of Bec, to organize for him the monastery of S. Werburg's, which he had established at Chester. Anselm, however, having heard a report that he was to be made archbishop, and shrinking from the total and unwelcome change of life which such a preferment would involve, declined the invitation. Earl Hugh repeated his invitation, pleading that he was sick; that in the rumours to which Anselm referred, there was nothing solid; and that it would be unworthy of him to allow them to interfere with his visit to a friend in his need. Again he refused. But when the invitation was a third time, and still more earnestly repeated, his conscience smote him, and, leaving the issues of the future in the hand of God, he crossed the Channel. At Canterbury he was welcomed exultantly as the new archbishop; a welcome which immediately drove him from the city. At Chester he met the Red King, who received him with great honour; but in a private interview was forced to listen to plain and unpalatable truths respecting the errors of his government. He was told that, openly or secretly, things were said of him daily by nearly all the men of his realm which were not seemly to the king's dignity. At Chester, Anselm found Earl Hugh recovered from his illness; but the organization of the new monastery detained

him there for nearly five months. He was then anxious to return to his beloved flock at Bec. Strange to say, for some unexplained reason, the Red King refused him permission to leave the kingdom. It may be surmised that he really wished to appoint him to the archbishopric, the prolonged vacancy of which was causing great scandal, but could not make up his mind to surrender its revenue. He was eventually inclined to come to a decision by a device of his nobles and bishops which Dean Church rightly characterizes as "one of the quaintest of all the quaint and original mixtures of simplicity and craft, of which the middle ages are full."

At Christmas, 1092, King William held his court in the royal city of Gloucester. There request was made of him that he would allow prayers to be offered in all the churches of his realm that God would put it into his heart to raise up the widowed see of S. Augustine from its shameful and unprecedented desolation. Was ever a stranger suggestion made? Was ever a popular wish conveyed in a simpler form? We are told that, at first, it angered the king; but, curiously enough, he eventually gave his consent; showing his sense of the inefficacy of prayer to move such a heart as his by adding, "that the Church might ask what *it* liked, but he would not give up doing what *he* liked." Nothing discouraged, the bishops applied to Anselm to draw up the form of prayer they wanted, and after his submitting that it was the task of the bishops,

rather than of a mere abbot, he did as they desired, and the prayer was accordingly offered most devoutly in all the churches of England. There was no evidence at first that it had had any influence upon him whose obduracy had instigated it. One of his nobles, conversing with him familiarly, spoke of the Abbot of Bec as the holiest man he had ever known, as a man who loved God only, and desired nothing transitory. "What," said Rufus, with a sneer, "not even the archbishopric?" "No, not even the archbishopric. Of this I am sure, and many there are who think as I do." "If he thought," rejoined the king, "that he had the smallest chance of it, would he not dance and clap his hands as he rushed to embrace it? But, by the Holy Face of Lucca, neither he nor any one else shall be archbishop at this time but myself."

A serious illness, however, which befel the king in the early days of 1093, filling his mind with gloomy recollections of evil-doing and swaying him momentarily with feelings of remorse and penitence, disposed him to repair one at least of his more obvious misdeeds, and to fill up the long-vacant archbishopric, the greatest and wealthiest see in his kingdom. In the alarm caused by the king's illness, Anselm had been sent for to act as a physician to the troubled soul. He had asked at the outset what the sick man's attendants had counselled; had approved of it, and added: "It is written, 'Begin to the Lord in confession,' and so it seems to me that, first, he should fully confess all that he knows he

has done contrary to God's law, and should promise that, if he recover, he will really amend all; and, next, that, without delay, he should order everything to be done which you have recommended." The purport of this advice was approved, and the charge entrusted to him of receiving the royal confession. When informed of what Anselm had judged to be most expedient for his soul's health, the king immediately agreed to it, and with great sorrow of heart, undertook to do all that Anselm's judgment required, and all his life long to keep more fully justice and mercifulness. To this he pledged his faith, and he made his bishops witnesses between himself and God, sending persons to promise this his word to God on the altar in his stead. An edict was written, and sealed with the king's seal, decreeing that "all persons whatsoever should be set free throughout his dominions; all debts irrevocably forgiven; all offences, heretofore committed, be pardoned and forgotten for ever. Further, good and holy laws were promised to all the people, and the inviolable maintenance of right, and such a serious inquiry into wrong-doing as might deter others."

When the king came to appoint to the archbishopric, it was natural that he should fix upon Anselm. The Abbot of Bec was, as he knew, the choice of the worthiest of his nobles and clergy, and he was now his own choice also. He had soon occasion to discover the groundlessness of his coarse suspicions of the pious scholar's disinterestedness. To him the mitre could bring nothing that he

loved ; neither peace, nor leisure for deep thought, nor friendly converse with his brethren. It brought honour and dignity, but for these he cared not at all. True, it brought also the power and the means of doing good, but not in the way to which the calm, earnest, unassuming scholar of Bec had been accustomed. Therefore, when the king's will was announced to him, he trembled and turned pale ; and when the bishops went to conduct him to receive investiture by the delivery from the royal hand of the pastoral staff, he steadily refused to accompany them. The bishops took him aside, and warmly expostulated with him : " What did he mean ? How could he strive against God ? Did he not see that Christianity had almost died out in England, that all kinds of wickedness prevailed, that the Churches of God were crushed beneath the royal tyranny ? And yet, when he could render succour, he scorned to do so ! Most wonderful of men, of what was he thinking ? Whither had his wits strayed ? Would he prefer his own ease and tranquillity to the call which had come to him to lift up Canterbury from its thralldom and downtroddenness, and to share in the labours of his brethren ? "

" Bear with me," he answered ; " bear with me, I pray you, and attend to my words. I know that your tribulations are great ; but, consider, I am old, and unfit for toil, and how can I bear the charge of all this Church ? I am a monk, and can honestly say that I have shunned all worldly business. Do not entangle me in what I have never loved, and am

not meet to undertake." They were not to be persuaded by his humility; and they offered to take the temporal part of his work, if he would step forward boldly, as "their guide and leader." He insisted that it could not, that it might not be. His foreign allegiance, and his foreign obedience to his archbishop, his ties to his monastery which could not be dissolved without the concurrence of his brethren—all these matters, they interrupted him, could be satisfactorily arranged. Still he refused. "It is in vain," he cried; "what you propose shall not come to pass."

But, laying loving hands upon him, they dragged him to the sick king's chamber. William, in the new terror that had come upon him, was urgently anxious to carry out his design, and with hot tears besought him, by the memory of his father and mother, who had been Anselm's friends, to deliver their son from the mortal peril in which he stood. So deeply affected were some of the bystanders by the king's evident distress, that they turned wrathfully upon the reluctant abbot. How senseless was his conduct, how extreme his folly! Did he not see that the king could not bear so much agitation; that he, Anselm, was embittering his last hours; that his would be the responsibility of all the mischief that might follow if he persisted in refusing the archiepiscopal charge? In his anxiety of mind Anselm sought comfort from two of his monks, Baldwin and Eustace, who accompanied him; "My brethren," he said, "why do you not assist me?"

Baldwin could simply advise a patient submission to the Divine will. Falling at Anselm's feet, all besought him to comply with the king's desire; he, in his turn, bent his knees, and implored them to accept his refusal. The scene could not be much longer protracted. Nobles and clergy waxed angry with him and with themselves, and, dragging him to the royal bedside, compelled him to hold out his right arm to receive the pastoral staff. Still, with an almost childish obstinacy, the abbot kept his hand firmly clenched; and it was only by the exercise of absolute force, which extorted from him a cry of pain, that they succeeded in thrusting the emblem of his new dignity into his reluctant fingers. While the bishops and priests raised the exultant notes of the "Te Deum," and the excited crowd joined in with shouts of "Long live the bishop," he was swept onward to the nearest church, exclaiming, half angrily, half sorrowfully, "It is nought, it is nought that ye are doing!" Afterwards he returned to the king; "I tell thee, my lord king," he cried, "that thou shalt not die of this sickness; know, therefore, that what has been done with me thou canst easily recall, since I have not acknowledged, nor do I acknowledge, its validity."

On leaving the sick king's apartment, he addressed the bishops and nobles. They did not know, he told them, the meaning of what they had done. They had yoked together to the plough the untameable bull with the old and feeble sheep; and of such an alliance no good could come. The plough, he

explained, was the Church of God, which, in England, was drawn by two stout oxen, the king and the Archbishop of Canterbury ; the one, by virtue of his justice, and his power in the things of the world ; the other, by virtue of his spiritual teaching, and his power in the things of the future life. Now one of these, Lanfranc, was dead ; and in his place they had yoked, with his fierce companion, a feeble sheep which, in its own home, might yield milk and wool and lambs for the Lord's service, but in its new sphere would only be the victim of violence which it was not strong enough to prevent. When their brief gratification at their success had passed, they would find that matters were worse than before. On him would fall the pressure of the king's furious temper. They would not have the courage to interpose between him and the king ; and when he was crushed, they, in their turn, would be trodden under foot. With these words he parted from them ; and, exhausted and weary, retired to his apartments (March 6, 1093).

If this speech be correctly recorded, and were really delivered on the occasion of Anselm's investiture, it is evident that he had accurately estimated the king's character, and forecasted the necessary result of the relations now established between them. It was impossible that the grave, earnest, plain-speaking Anselm, with his high ideal of a Christian life, and his lofty conception of the mission of the Christian Church, should remain at peace with the sensual, overbearing, and impetuous

William. But in what had taken place Anselm saw the hand of God, and he no longer resisted or repined. With heroic patience he endured the calumnies that were speedily levelled at him. The Bishop of Evreux openly expressed his conviction that he had visited England on purpose to obtain the primacy. Duke Robert of Normandy was equally assured of his selfishness; and not a few even of his own monks of Bec repeated the foul slander. They judged him out of their own hearts. Calmly, however, the archbishop went on his way. He knew that he had not sought the office; it had been given to him, he believed, by God; and he resolved to discharge its duties with courage and sincerity. He had resisted as long as resistance was possible or justifiable; but reflection convinced him that in the interests of the Church of God it must no longer be maintained.

He addressed serious letters of explanation and expostulation to the monks of Bec. "If you knew," he wrote, "what evils the continuance of the long vacancy of the archbishopric has wrought, both upon souls and bodies, and how abhorrent it is, and how hateful are they who caused it, to all the wise and better sort, aye, and to all the English people, you would not, had you the feelings of men, consent to its further prolongation. . . . There are some, I am told—God knows who they are—who either enviously imagine, or mistakenly suspect, or are stung by ungovernable irritation to assert, that I am drawn to the archbishopric rather by a selfish

ambition than forced to it by a religious necessity. If my past life and conduct do not satisfy these persons, I know not what I can say to persuade them that I have acted according to my conscience. I have worn the monastic habit for three and thirty years; three without office, fifteen as prior, fifteen as abbot; and those who have known me have loved me, not through any anxious care of my own, but through God's mercy; those the most, who have known me the most familiarly and intimately; and none of them saw in me reason to suppose that I took delight in promotion. What, then, can I do? How can I drive away and extinguish this false and hateful suspicion, so that it may not hurt the souls of those who once loved me for God's sake by chilling their charity? or of those to whom my advice or example might possibly be of some advantage, by leading them to think me worse than I really am? or of those who do not know me and hear this scandal, by setting before them an evil pattern? . . . Thou God seest me; be Thou my witness that I know not, as my conscience tells me, why the love of aught which, as a despiser of the world, Thy servant ought to despise, should drag and bind me to the archbishopric to which I am suddenly hurried."

It was necessary to obtain the consent of the Duke of Normandy, the Archbishop of Rouen, and the monks of Bec, to Anselm's demission of his abbacy; and while these arrangements were being completed, the king recovered from his sickness.

With renewed health came back the old ungovernable passions, the furious animosities, the bitter prejudices. The promises extorted from him by the fear of death were shamelessly recalled. The good intentions disappeared; and the last state was worse than the first. All the evil which the king had done before he was sick seemed good in comparison with the evil which he did when restored to health. To a remonstrance from Bishop Gundulf of Rochester he replied with blasphemous boast and exaggeration, "By the Holy Face of Lucca, God shall never gain by me for the ill He has brought upon me!" It is strange that, while in this mood of mind, he did not cancel the appointment of Anselm. He seems to have been really impressed by the holiness of his character; though the impression did not prevent him from adhering to his own stern purposes.

It was soon apparent that the king and the archbishop would proceed on very different lines of policy. They had an interview at Rochester, in the course of which Anselm stated very distinctly the conditions on which he accepted the primacy. All the archiepiscopal lands which Lanfranc had held must be granted to him without trouble, and if there were estates belonging to the see which had been wrested from it, the king must restore them. Next, in all matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, the king must agree to respect his counsel; and as he acknowledged in the king his earthly father and protector, so must the king acknowledge in him his spiritual father and ghostly adviser. And, lastly,

in the existing dispute between the rival popes, Urban and the anti-pope Clement, the latter of whom was acknowledged by the emperor, he reminded Rufus that the Norman Church had recognized Urban, and he said that from this recognition he himself would not depart. The king by his council accepted these conditions, with the exception of the claim for a restoration of Church lands usurped by the Crown since Lanfranc's death. On this point Anselm stood firm, and a delay ensued that revived all the apprehensions of the Church. At length some kind of promise was wrung from the king, and Anselm could no longer withstand the pressure put upon him. On the 5th of September he was solemnly enthroned at Canterbury. On the 4th of December, in the presence of nearly all the English bishops, he was consecrated by the Archbishop of York. In accordance with the ancient ritual, the Book of the Gospels, opened haphazard, was laid on the new primate's shoulders, and the passage at which it opened was accepted as a kind of omen of his episcopate. It ran thus: "He bade many, and sent His servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse."

Bickerings on the king's part soon began. He was in want of funds to carry on war against his brother Robert, and expected gifts from the nobles and prelates of his kingdom. Unwillingly, for he disapproved of the principle involved, Anselm offered

five hundred marks. They were refused ; a much larger sum was required from a man who had just been raised to the primacy of all England. Anselm replied that it was his first present, but not his last ; and that a free gift was worth more than a compulsory contribution. The king overwhelmed him with reproaches, and dismissed him in a burst of passion.

In February, 1094, he was summoned to attend William at Hastings, to bless, and offer up prayers for the safety of, his expedition to Normandy. The archbishop took advantage of the opportunity to press upon the king some measures for reforming the kingdom, which had fallen into a slough of immorality. First, he desired the appointment of a council of bishops who, with the royal sanction and authority, should determine in what way the Christian religion, which had well-nigh perished in many places, might be revived, and the moral influence of the Church be restored. And next, he asked that the vacant religious offices, such as those of the abbots of monasteries, might be filled up, in order to bring the clergy under proper control. The king replied to the first request that he would call a council when he pleased, and that he did not see what it was to do. "Unless judgment and discipline," said Anselm, "are exercised in earnest, the whole land will soon be a Sodom." "What good would come of this matter for yourself?" inquired the king. "If not for me, at least, I hope, for God and for you." "What are the abbeys to you?"

continued the angry monarch; "are they not mine? Go to; you do what you like with your farms, and shall I not do what I like with my abbeys?" "They are yours for you to protect them; not to be wasted, destroyed, and abused for the expense of your wars." "Your predecessor," exclaimed Rufus, passionately, "durst not have spoken thus to my father; I will do nothing for you!"

Anselm's friends would fain have had him buy his way back into the royal favour; but to this the archbishop would not consent. The money would have had to have been wrung from the tenants of the see, and they had already suffered heavily from the extortion of the king's agents. At any rate, said his friends, he could give the five hundred marks already offered. But he said he would not again offer what had been rejected; and, indeed, the greater portion of it had been bestowed upon the poor. This conversation was reported to William, who answered: "Yesterday I hated him much, to-day I hate him still more; to-morrow and ever after he may be sure I shall hate him with bitterer hatred. As father and archbishop, I will never regard him again; his blessings and prayers I utterly abhor and refuse. Let him go where he will, and not wait any longer for my cursing to give me his blessing."

An open rupture now took place, and William began to consider in what way he could force Anselm to resign the archbishopric he had thrust upon him. A cause of quarrel quickly presented

itself, when an unscrupulous mind was eagerly on the search for it. It was the usage of western Christendom that, on being appointed, a metropolitan should visit Rome to receive at the pope's hands the *pallium*, or white woollen stole, blazoned with four crosses, which was the emblem of his dignity. Anselm, in the spring of 1095, prepared to comply with the established precedent, and asked the king's permission. But when William understood that his primate intended to repair to Pope Urban, he broke out into one of his fits of passion, declaring that he had never recognized him, and that no man should acknowledge a pope in England without his leave. This he declared to be the law of his kingdom. As no such rule had been formally proclaimed, Anselm demanded that a Great Council should be held to consider the question, and the king accordingly summoned the national assembly of bishops, abbots, and nobles, to meet at the Castle of Rockingham on Mid-Lent Sunday, March 11, 1095. The king did not appear, but sat apart with his private council, occasionally sending messages to Anselm, and receiving messages from him. The archbishop's statement was very frank. He had informed the king, he said, before he accepted the archbishopric, that he had acknowledged Urban to be pope, and would not fail in his obedience. On the other hand, the king had recently said to him, "If you receive Urban or any one else in my realm as pope, without my choice and authority, or if having received him, you hold to him, you act

against the faith which you hold to me, and offend me not less than if you sought to deprive me of my crown. Therefore, rest assured that in my realm you shall have no part, unless I have proof by plain declarations that, according to my wish, you refuse all submission and obedience to Urban." Such were the king's words; and what Anselm now asked of the Council was, to consider whether, saving his faith to the king, he could maintain his fealty to the Apostolic See. "It is a serious thing," he exclaimed, "to despise and deny the Vicar of S. Peter; it is a serious thing to violate the faith which, under God, I promised to keep to the king. And that, too, is serious which is said, that it is impossible for me to keep the one without breaking the other."

The bishops could not do otherwise than admit the justice of William's claim. His father had strenuously asserted it, and Lanfranc himself had never attempted to dispute it. After considerable discussion, extending over a couple of days, they replied cautiously to Anselm's question, that they could not advise him, unless he submitted himself, without reserve or qualification, to the king's will. Up rose Anselm, and, with indignant eloquence, addressed them: "Since you, the shepherds of the Christian people, and you, who are called chiefs of the nation, refuse me your counsel, I will repair to the Chief Shepherd and Prince of all. I will hasten to the *Angel of Great Counsel*, and receive from Him the advice which I will follow in this my cause; yea, His cause and that of His Church. He says to

the most blessed of the apostles, Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build My Church;' and again, to all the apostles jointly, 'He that hears you hears Me, and he that despises you despises Me; and he who touches you touches the apple of Mine eye.' It was primarily to S. Peter, and in him to the other apostles; it is primarily to S. Peter's vicar, and through him to the other bishops who fill the Apostles' places, that these words, as we believe, were said; not to any emperor whatsoever, not to any king, or count, or duke. But in what we must be subject and minister to earthly princes, the same Angel of Great Counsel teaches us, saying, 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.' These are God's words; these are God's counsels; these I allow and accept, and from these I will not depart. Know ye, therefore, all of you, that in the things that are God's, I will render obedience to the Vicar of S. Peter; and in those which belong of right to the earthly dignity of my lord the king, I will render him both faithful counsel and service, to the best of my power and understanding."

This assertion of the Church's spiritual independence was received with exclamations of anger; and as all the members of the Council refused to carry Anselm's answer to the king, he repaired to the royal presence, and there repeated it. The confusion that ensued can easily be imagined. Anselm quietly withdrew himself from it, and returning to the church to await the issue, he leaned his head against the

wall, and fell into a calm sleep. It was late in the day when the bishops, with some of the barons, disturbed his repose. "The king," they said, "would admit of no delay or evasion. The question was one so simple as to call for no argument upon it. The whole realm exclaimed against him for impairing the lustre of their lord's imperial crown; for to take away the customs [or prerogatives] of the royal dignity was as good as taking away the king's crown; one could not be fitly upheld without the other. And what had he, Anselm, to gain by persisting in his disobedience? This Urban would be of no use to him; why not shake off the yoke of subjection to him and be free, as was fitting in an Archbishop of Canterbury, to fulfil the commandments of our lord the king. Let him, like a wise man, ask pardon of the king, and comply with his wish; and so they who hated him, and rejoiced in his troubles, would be put to confusion by the restoration of his high place."

It was now dusk, and Anselm asked permission to defer his answer to the morrow; so that, thinking over it, he might reply according as God should be pleased to dictate. The Bishop of Durham, William de S. Carileph, not understanding the character of the primate, thought he was wavering; and, returning to the king, promised that he would either make Anselm renounce the pope, or compel him to surrender the ring and staff, the insignia of his dignity. In either case William's object would be attained. If Anselm forswore his allegiance to Urban, his humili-

ation would be complete; if he resigned his see, the royal authority would be fully established. What Rufus desired was to deprive Anselm of the power to carry out his meditated reforms. He seemed to feel as if the crown were not fully his, so long as any one in all the land was said, even in religious questions (*secundum Deum*), to hold anything or enjoy any supremacy or influence, except through himself. Bishop William, therefore, went back to Anselm with the king's last words. The archbishop was charged not to speak of delay until he had made amends for the insult he had offered to the king in acknowledging the Bishop of Ostia as pope. "Answer at once," so ran the haughty message, "or you shall feel on the spot the punishment which is to avenge your presumption. Do not treat it as a jest; for to us it is a matter of anger and great pain. And who can wonder? That which your lord and ours esteems as the chief prerogative of his rule, that in which it is certain he surpasses all other princes, you, as far as you can, deprive him of, against your sworn fealty to him, and to the great distress and anxiety of all his friends." Anselm listened to this outburst with patience, and calmly replied: "If any one can prove that because I will not renounce the obedience of the venerable Bishop of the Holy Roman Church, I am violating my oath and my faith to my earthly king, let him stand forward, and he shall find me prepared to answer him, as and where I ought."

"As and where I ought;" that is, before the

pope, who alone was competent, in Anselm's belief, to try and condemn the highest dignitary of the English Church. It was not for the bishops to dispute a claim which they themselves had been accustomed to reverence; nor did it sound preposterous in the ears of any of the bystanders. On the contrary, the crowd were heartily on the archbishop's side; and a soldier, pressing forward, threw himself on his knees before him, and exclaimed: "Lord and Father, thy children, through me, implore thee not to let thy heart be grieved by what thou hast heard. Do thou bethink thee how holy Job on the dunghill subdued Satan, and avenged Adam whom Satan had conquered in Paradise." Anselm rejoiced at this spontaneous expression of sympathy, which showed that the common people made the Church's cause their own cause. "We were glad," says his biographer, "and were at ease in our minds, being confident, according to the Scripture, that *vox populi est vox Dei*."

In the king's court the tumult of feeling raged loud and long; and while the grossest insults were hurled at the courageous primate, even the Bishop of Durham did not escape. He was hotly reproached for his failure; but could only recommend that the staff and ring should be taken from the impracticable Anselm by force. The barons of the royal council, however, regarded the proposal with dissatisfaction. It seemed to them an insult scarcely inferior to an insult to the crown. "If it do not please you, then," cried the angry king, "what *will*

please you? While I live I will endure no equal in my realm. And if you knew that he had so much strength upon his side, why did you let me engage in this legal conflict against him? Go, go! take counsel together; for, by the face of God, if you do not condemn him, I will condemn you!" Then said Robert, Count of Mellent: "About taking counsel together I hardly know what to say. For when we have been discussing these matters all day long, and by talking them over among ourselves, have, as we think, settled them, the archbishop goes to sleep, and evidently thinks no harm; or, if we speak of them in his presence, with one breath of his lips he puffs them away as if they were a cobweb." Once more the irate sovereign turned to the bishops, but all they could undertake was to withdraw their obedience from their metropolitan, and renounce their brotherly friendship with him. This, accordingly, the king accepted; and as he at the same time recalled his confidence and protection, Anselm occupied the position of an outlaw, deprived of the friendship to which he was entitled both from his bishops and his king. But the barons refused to concur in this ostracizing policy. They saw that it involved an extension of the royal prerogative which might, at a future time, be turned against themselves. Prudence, if no higher motive, disposed them to take the archbishop's side; but, probably, in many of them higher motives were not wanting. Some may have admired the lofty courage and holy character of Anselm;

others may have felt a sincere respect for the Church. At all events, their answer to the king was fatal to his projects. "We never were the archbishop's men," they said, "and we cannot abjure the fealty which we never swore. But he is our archbishop. It is for him to regulate Christian religion in this realm; and, in this matter, we, who are Christians, cannot refuse his guidance while we live here, especially as no taint of offence attaches to him to justify you in acting differently towards him." While thus composedly traversing the royal scheme, they did not hesitate to express in plainest terms their opinions of the conduct of the bishops, likening one of them to Judas the traitor, another to Herod, a third to Pilate, and giving free vent to their disgust and contempt.

This trial of strength between king and primate ended in a truce. The point at issue was deferred for settlement to Whitsuntide. In his first campaign the king had gained nothing, and he withdrew from the field sullenly to devise a new form of attack. As for Anselm, he was always contented to bide his time; and ignoring the petty insults practised upon him and his people by the royal tools, he retired to his palace at Harrow, and devoted himself to his usual pursuits.

In his next movement the Red King displayed the most consummate craft. He suddenly granted Urban his formal recognition in England, and in return for this concession obtained that the archiepiscopal *pallium* should be sent to himself instead of to

Anselm. He failed, however, to procure Anselm's deposition, though he endeavoured to bribe the pope by the promise of a considerable payment yearly. With as much haste as he had exercised in acknowledging Pope Urban, he then proceeded to suspend his quarrel with the archbishop. He proposed to receive him again into his fullest confidence and favour; and when he found that he would not receive the pall from his hands, because he regarded it as a sign and symbol of spiritual power, he yielded with marvellous complacency. On the third Sunday after Trinity (June 10th), it was solemnly laid on the altar of Canterbury, and taken thence by the archbishop with the customary ceremonial. Thereafter, peace prevailed; peace, at least, so far as Anselm was concerned. But the land was not at peace, and the Church was not at peace. William had bought, or rather hired, Normandy from his brother Robert for three years; paying him a large sum of money which had to be made up by an iniquitous process of extortion. "There was no man rich," says the chronicler,* "except the money-changers; no clerk unless he was a lawyer; no priest unless (to use an expression hardly Latin) he was a farmer. Men of the meanest condition, or guilty of whatsoever crime, were listened to, if they could suggest anything likely to be advantageous to the king; the halter was loosened from the robber's neck, if he would promise any emolument to the sovereign. All military discipline

* William of Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 314.

being relaxed, the courtiers preyed upon the property of the common people, and consumed their substance by taking the very meat from the mouths of those wretched creatures."

In the spring of 1097, the king's anger again flamed out against Anselm. He found fault with the contingent of soldiers sent to the army, and summoned him before his Court to "do the king right." This was a crushing blow for the archbishop, as the king was absolute master in his own court, and the question was one of feudal service, and not of ecclesiastical order. Aware that all judgments in the King's Court were dependent merely on his word, and were regulated by considerations neither of justice nor mercy, neither of law nor equity, he felt that resistance was useless, and that his sole resource was in the chief ruler of the Church. He applied, therefore, for leave to visit Rome. The king's refusal was peremptory. Anselm, said Rufus, "could have no sin which required absolution; and as for counsel, he was better fitted to give it to the Apostolic Vicar than to receive it from him." In August, the request was repeated, and again refused. In October he waited upon the king at Winchester, and renewed his petition. A third time it was rejected, and he was warned to beware of the consequences if he again pressed his request, or went without permission. The bishops, as usual, were on the king's side; and this time the barons also were opposed to the archbishop, urging that it was contrary to the customs of the realm for

a dignitary and high officer of state like Anselm to leave it without the royal license. They reminded him that he had sworn to obey these customs. "Yes," he replied, "but according to right, and according to God," a qualification which reminds us of that put forward by Becket in his quarrel with Henry II. Eventually, the king accorded a reluctant permission; and Anselm was told that, though he was free to go, he must take with him nothing which belonged to the king. A second message ordered him to depart within ten days, and stated that the king's officer would meet him at the coast, and arrange what horses and equipment might accompany him. With characteristic gentleness Anselm sought his impetuous sovereign to take leave of him. "My lord," he said, "I go. Had it been with your goodwill, it would have become you better, and have been more agreeable to all good people. But as this may not be, though I am sorry on your behalf, I will bear it, as far as I am concerned, with an even mind, and will not, by God's mercy, abandon on this account my concern for your soul's health. And now, not knowing when we shall meet again, I commend you to God; and as a spiritual father to his beloved son, as the Archbishop of Canterbury to the King of England, I would fain, before I go, with your consent, bestow on you God's blessing and my own." The king bowed his assent, and Anselm, lifting his right hand, made the sign of the cross upon him.

Returning to Canterbury, the archbishop bade

farewell to its monks, took at the altar his pilgrim's staff and rings, and went on his way to Dover. There the weather detained him for a fortnight, during which time William Warelwast, the king's officer,* maintained a surveillance over him. When he embarked, this agent of the royal meanness insisted on searching his baggage. As might have been expected, the search revealed no hidden treasure; and the insulted archbishop, being allowed to embark, crossed the Channel in safety, and landed at Witsand. The revenues of the see were immediately confiscated by the king, who applied them to his own purposes until his death.

The Englishman of the present day can hardly be expected to sympathize with Anselm in his appeal to the tribunal of the papacy, which was virtually the recognition of an authority other and higher than that of the crown of England. There can be no doubt that by this act he established a precedent which compromised the independence of the English Church, and encouraged the injurious encroachments of Rome. King William, in forbidding an appeal to an irresponsible power which arrogated to itself the right of elevating and deposing monarchs, and of absolving subjects from their allegiance, was simply protecting the honour of his throne, and the liberties of his people. And yet for Anselm, in his time, there was no other alternative, unless he sub-

* This was probably William de Warelwast, Bishop of Exeter, 1107.

mitted to an intolerable tyranny. There was then no law to interpose between the victim and the oppressor. There were no courts of justice to which the wronged could resort with the certainty of obtaining redress. The Church was then the asylum of all who were abused, ill-treated, down-trodden, and enslaved; and its Head was the Head of all Christendom, the Father of the fatherless, the defender of the helpless, the strength of the feeble. It was at least as natural that Anselm, conscious of his honest exertions in the cause of religion and order, should seek the sympathy and protection of his ecclesiastical and spiritual ruler; as that Rufus and his barons should resent what seemed to them a rebellious effort to secure the intervention of a rival power in the affairs of the kingdom of England.

In November, 1097, Anselm began his pilgrimage to Italy. We find him spending his Christmas festival at the famous monastery of Cluni, which had given to the papal throne one of its greatest occupants, in the person of Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII. In the spring of 1098 he crossed the Alps, and shortly after Easter arrived at Rome, where Pope Urban received him with great respect, providing him with apartments in his own palace of the Lateran. In assemblies of the nobles, in stations, and in processions his place was always next to the pope, who spoke of him indeed as his equal in ecclesiastical authority, as the patriarch, the *Apostolicus*, or Apostolic Vicar of a second world. But Anselm soon found that the pope in theory and the

pope in reality were widely different personages. Theoretically, he was the supreme guide and ruler of Christendom, the divinely appointed oracle of Christ, the representative on earth of the Divine Power. Really, he was an old man of considerable ability and experience, engaged in a protracted struggle to maintain his position against the anti-pope, and with difficulty making head against a tumultuous "sea of troubles." He did not wish to incur the hostility of a prince so powerful and so unscrupulous as the Red King ; and was too prudent to hurl the thunders of the Church at a man who would assuredly despise them, and might retaliate with dangerous force. He resorted to the favourite expedient of the Roman See—he temporized. Letters of remonstrance were addressed to Rufus, but nothing more ; and courteous attention was paid to Anselm, to compensate for the want of effective support.

The summer of 1098 was spent by the archbishop at the monastery of Schiavi, and there, in the solitude of the mountains, he completed his dialogue on the Incarnation and Atonement, entitled "*Cur Deus Homo* ;" a work which to this day has exercised no inconsiderable influence on theological speculation. Afterwards he joined Pope Urban in Apulia, and assisted him in mediating between the Count of Sicily and the Lombards. In October he was present at the Council of Bari, "where a number of difficult questions being submitted by the Greeks concerning the faith and other mysteries, and by the pope's command, preached a sermon to them all, and satis-

fied both Greeks and Latins by his noble and luminous replies to the several propositions.”* At the Council appeared William Warelwast, with the king’s complaint against his archbishop. In the public audience the pope’s tone was as firm as Anselm and his supporters could desire; but at a private interview he was more compliant, and William’s envoy obtained what may be called a truce of nine months, from Christmas, 1098. Convinced by this time that nothing was to be hoped from the pope’s interference, Anselm was anxious to retire to Lyons; but Urban, on various pretences, detained him until April, 1099, when a council was held at the Lateran. The archbishop’s advice proved of high value in the settlement of many difficult points. At the close of the Council the canons which it had enacted were publicly proclaimed in S. Peter’s by the Bishop of Lucca. He had read but a few of them when he suddenly paused: and, with flashing eyes, and every sign of profound emotion, proceeded to address his amazed audience. “What,” he exclaimed, “what are we doing here? We are loading men with laws, yet we are afraid to withstand the cruelties of tyrannical princes. Hither come the plundered and oppressed with their complaints; from hence, as from the source and head of all things, men ask for assistance and advice. And with what result all the world sees and knows. One from the ends of the earth is sitting among us, in modest silence, calm and meek.

* Ordericus Vitalis, book x. c. 8.

But his silence is a loud cry. The deeper and gentler his patience and humility, the higher his petition rises before God, the more it should kindle our sympathy. This one man, this one man, I say, has come hither in his cruel wrongs and afflictions to appeal to the judgment and equity of the Apostolic See. And this is the second year; and what has he gained? If you do not know whom I mean, it is"—and here, in a burst of anger, he thrice struck the floor violently with his staff—"Anselm, the Primate of England." The pope interrupted the indignant bishop with a promise that Anselm's case should receive his attention; but the promise and the burst of anger were equally without result. No time, indeed, was given to the pope to keep his word, even had he wished, for three months later he died. Meanwhile, the Red King went on his way, rejoicing in his complete independence of the Church; and Anselm, retiring to France, occupied himself in holy works and devout studies.

In the August of 1100, he was at the monastery of God's House (*Chaise Dieu*) in the vine-clad country of the Auvergne; and it was there that he received the news of the death of William, and the accession of Henry I., with a pressing request from the king and his barons that he would return to England. He had no motive for prolonging his exile; and before the close of the following month he had joined King Henry at Salisbury. A warm friendship sprang up between them; and Anselm, in accordance with his characteristically liberal sympathies, supported

the king's design of a marriage with Matilda, the daughter of Malcolm of Scotland, and his English queen, Margaret, and the representative of the old English royal line, through whom the blood and the right of what Freeman calls "the Imperial House of Wessex," have passed to the Angevin, the Scottish, and the German sovereigns of England. It was asserted that Matilda had taken the vows of a nun, the truth being (as she alleged) that her aunt, Christina, Abbess of Romsey, had made her wear the veil as a protection against Norman rudeness, and had wished her to embrace a religious life. Anselm, after inquiry, declared her under no such obligation; and himself celebrated the marriage ceremony between her and King Henry, and pronounced the benediction of the Church.

Encouraged by Henry's promises, the archbishop entered upon his great work of the reformation of the Church, and, through the Church, of the social life of England. But he was soon to learn that Henry at heart was a true son of William the Conqueror, and indisposed to concede one jot of the prerogatives and privileges of the Crown. He was as determined as his brother had been, that the appointment of the bishops of English sees, and the abbots of English abbacies, should be in his hands; and that from him they should receive the pastoral staff which was the recognized symbol of their spiritual authority. He had stated his pretensions at his first interview with Anselm, but both had avoided discussion by agreeing to refer the matter

to Rome. A long delay ensued; but in 1102 Pope Paschal's answer came, and, as Anselm undoubtedly expected, it was unfavourable to the king's claims. Henry, however, at once repudiated the papal decision, and summoned Anselm to do homage to him on account of his archbishopric. Anselm pleaded the decision of the Roman Council, to be met with the stern rejoinder that the king would not yield "the customs" of his predecessors, nor suffer in the realm a man who was not his. Again a quarrel was temporarily avoided by the expedient of sending an embassy to Rome, instructed to explain to the pope, as fully as possible, the exact nature of the royal demand, and the grounds on which it was based. Rome, however, does not know how to conciliate; and the pope was inflexible in preserving his original position. The envoys returned with letters to the king and the archbishop, in which his decision was repeated.

But when the ambassadors appeared before the royal council, it was found that the pope had adopted towards them, in private, a very different tone to that which he had assumed in public; and the Archbishop of York, with his colleagues, the Bishops of Chester and Thetford, announced that they were intrusted with a verbal message to the king, confirming to him the privilege of investiture so long as he acted in good faith and appointed holy men. As this was in direct contradiction of the papal letters, we need not be surprised that Anselm's representatives protested against it,

declaring that the prelates had violated their canonical oaths, and charging them with the invention of a falsehood. They, on their part, adhered to their statement, which, by the members of the Council, was accepted or rejected according as they espoused the cause of Anselm or the king. The archbishop's partisans relied on the letters, sealed with the pope's signet. The king's declared they were merely "sheepskins, with a lump of lead at the bottom." "Well! well!" exclaimed the clergy, "are not the Gospels written on sheepskins?"

A third embassy was sent to Rome; and in the interval, Henry made two appointments, that of his Chancellor Roger to Salisbury, and Roger, the overseer of his larder, to Hereford, which, certainly, did nothing to justify his pretensions. On the other hand, a great council held at Westminster, towards the latter end of the year, granted Anselm some of the reforms for which he had earnestly contended. He was afterwards required by the king to consecrate the new Bishops of Salisbury and Hereford, as well as Walter Gifford, whom the king had appointed Bishop of Winchester. On his refusal, the king ordered Gerard, Archbishop of York, to perform the rite; and he, an old antagonist of Anselm's, willingly consented. But both Hereford and Winchester refused to receive consecration at his hands, and Henry's project was thus most unexpectedly baffled. He restrained his anger until Lent, 1103, when he broke in upon Anselm's peace at Canterbury, and declared that his patience was exhausted, and that

he must and would have the rights and privileges which his predecessors had enjoyed before him. He was neither taking from the pope, nor wishing to take, he said, aught that belonged to him; he was asking only for his own. Would the archbishop himself repair to the Roman court, and endeavour to secure for his king the rights which had always appertained to the English Crown? Anselm expressed his willingness to go to Rome, but added that he could do nothing to the prejudice of the Church's liberty or to the injury of his own honour.

Soon after Easter the aged archbishop—he was then about seventy years old—set out on his journey to Rome. He did not use much haste. He had many friends to see, and many places to visit; and it was not until the beginning of September that he entered the Apostolic city. There he found the king's envoy, his old opponent, William Warelwast, and the tug of war began. Warelwast asked that the well-known "customs" of William the Conqueror should be recognized and confirmed, and pleaded that so much at least might be granted to the liberality and power of the kings of England. Encouraged by the sympathy of some of his barons, and the pope's silence, on which he put a favourable interpretation, Warelwast continued:—"Know all men present, that, not to save his kingdom, will King Henry give up the investiture of the Churches." He was surprised at the stern answer which fell from the pope's lips:—"Nor, before God, to save his head, will Pope Paschal grant them to

him." Negotiations followed; and Rome temporized and cajoled without yielding, as was and always has been its policy. Finally, Anselm was confirmed in the primacy of England, and a soothing, flattering, and laudatory letter was addressed to the king. But, in reality, the quarrel remained undecided; the Church and the State maintained their former positions. Henry was as far from yielding as William had been, though he was more courteous in his language, and less arbitrary in asserting his claims. Anselm was as firm as Becket afterwards proved, though he was of a gentler character, and disinclined to open warfare.

Having received an intimation that Henry did not wish for his return to England, unless he was prepared to be to him what his predecessors had been to former kings, Anselm withdrew to Lyons. It is curiously illustrative of the character of both that they still maintained a courteous correspondence. The king was not slow to express his regret at the archbishop's inability to comply with his requirements. "If you would," he wrote, "I would gladly receive you; and all the instances of honour, dignity, and friendship, which my father showed to Lanfranc, your predecessor, I would show to you. But our lord the pope has sent to me his requests and admonitions on certain points; and, therefore, I design to send ambassadors to Rome, and by the counsel of God and our barons, answer our lord the pope respecting them, asking for so much as I ought to ask for. When I have received his answer,

I will write to you as God may put it into my mind. In the mean time I am willing that you should receive what is suitable from the revenues of the Church of Canterbury ; though this I say reluctantly, because there is no man living whom I would rather have in my kingdom with me than you, were it not for causes you yourself create." Anselm, in reply, urged that he could not do otherwise than he had done ; that he had no wish to thwart the king ; but that he must obey the law as laid down by the Pope, the Father of the Church. This was exactly the measure of the difference between the two correspondents ; Anselm looked for the law to the pope ; Henry was determined that he himself, and he alone, should be its expounder. Anselm repeatedly stated that it was not he who forbade the king to grant investitures ; but the Apostolic Vicar. He had referred the decision to the pope, and as the Pope had decided, so he acted. This may not have been a very grand or heroic, but it was, at least, an intelligible position. Yet it exposed him to a torrent of reproaches and calumnies. If he cared so little about "the customs," as to be willing to concede them at the pope's command, why did he refuse to come to some compromise with the king ? His contemporaries did not perceive that it was for the pope's command he waited ; that he could not consent to do anything which was not sanctioned by the supreme authority of the Church.

Some eighteen months elapsed before Anselm came to understand that Rome would do nothing to

relieve him from his difficulty; that it cajoled him as it cajoled King Henry, and was as unwilling to pronounce a final judgment on the one side as on the other. Then Anselm seems to have resolved on independent action; and when Henry refused to restore the property of the archiepiscopal see, he intimated to the king's sister, the Countess Adela of Blois, that he intended to excommunicate him. An excommunication pronounced by a man of such saintly character and extensive influence as Anselm could not be despised. In the hands of his enemies Henry saw that it would be a powerful weapon; and, with his usual wariness, he strove to bring about an accommodation. Through the agency of the countess, he met the archbishop at the Chateau de l'Aigle, near Chartres (July 22, 1105); and a reconciliation took place between them. The king, it must be owned, behaved with singular generosity, and assented to almost everything that Anselm desired. The old difficulty, the right of investiture, was evaded by another reference to Rome.

This reference proved less unsatisfactory than former references. In April, 1106, the pope authorized Anselm to release those persons who had come under excommunication for breaking the canons about homage and investiture. Thus he condoned all that Henry had done in the past, and rendered it possible for Anselm to return to England. It is true that he made no provision to meet future troubles; but he may have recollected that Anselm was far advanced in years, and have calculated that

his successor would be more compliant. At all events, Henry was so far satisfied that he pressed the archbishop to return to England; and, on his landing, received him with a frank cordiality which could not be otherwise than welcome. It is clear that his keen, strong intellect recognized the purity of Anselm's motives, and the rectitude of his purpose; that he respected him as a man of high thinking and pure living. And there was that in himself which, in his better moments, sympathized with the saintly ecclesiastic, and patient but resolute scholar, who upheld the cause of the Church in the belief that it was also the cause of Christ, and that only through and by the Church could the evils of the age be checked, and society enlightened and elevated. Intellectually and morally Henry was a greater man than his brother Rufus; and hence his contention with Anselm ended in a worthier manner. The compromise which terminated it was, indeed, honourable to both; and was due as much to Anselm's personal character as to Henry's sagacious policy. But this much must be said for Henry: that when he had determined on concession, the concession was made frankly and trustfully, with an entire absence of narrow restrictions or secret reservations. On the 1st of August, 1107, he summoned the bishops, abbots, and chief men of the realm, to a council at his palace in London; and submitted to them the question of the investitures of churches. It occupied three days of earnest debate. There were not wanting "king's men" to

insist that Henry should cling to the customs of his father and brother, and disregard the command of the pope. "For the pope," says Eadmer, "standing firm in the decision which he had formerly promulgated, had allowed the homage which Pope Urban had forbidden equally with the investitures; and this had induced the king to yield as regarded the latter." So, in the presence of the great archbishop, the king decreed that thenceforth no person should be invested in England with bishopric or abbey by staff and ring, either by the king or by any lay hand. And, in return, Anselm declared that no one elected to a prelacy should be refused consecration because he had done homage to the king. In this way the respective claims of the Church and the Crown were settled; and in the circumstances of the age, the settlement was neither unwise nor unjust. It gave a victory to neither; it provided the one with a check upon the other; and if it seemed to imply a recognition of the supremacy of the pope, we must remember that the pope was then the representative as well as the ruler of the Church; and that the Church was the centre of all religious activity and almost all intellectual effort, and the defender of the weak against the oppression of the strong. The Roman Church was then, as usual, in advance of the age, as it has since been behind it; and its spiritual power was the sole hope, protection, and consolation of Christendom.*

* "The central power of the pope, which Anselm strengthened, grew rapidly with the growth and advance of the times: it grew

This was the last great event of Anselm's life. During his remaining years he ceased not to urge forward the work of ecclesiastical reform, and to press upon Henry the urgent necessity of relieving the condition of the impoverished and oppressed commonalty. His mental powers preserved their brightness; though it may, perhaps, be admitted that some signs of decay are to be detected in his treatise on "the Agreement of Foreknowledge, Predestination, and the Grace of God with Free Will." The subject, however, is one on which it is easy for the cleverest intellect to involve itself in obscurity. A long and severe illness at Bury St. Edmund's was the direct cause of the break up of his constitution. He was never afterwards able to ride on horseback, but had to be carried in a litter. He became subject to frequent attacks of indisposition. Yet his growing weakness could not induce him to abandon the old order of his laborious life; and he was constantly engaged in the service of his Divine Master.

Towards the close of 1108, the weakness of his to be abused; it usurped the powers to which it was the counterpoise; it threatened, as they had threatened, to absorb all rights of sovereignty, all national and personal claims to independence and freedom; it had in its turn to be resisted, restrained, at last, in England, expelled. It went through the usual course of successful power in human hands. But this is no reason why at the time it should not have been the best, perhaps, even the only defence of the greatest interests of mankind against the immediate presence of the tyrannies and selfishness of the time. If anything else could then have taken its place in those days, the history of Europe has not disclosed it."—Dean Church, "St. Anselm," pp. 290, 291.

stomach was so great that it loathed almost any kind of food; and it was with difficulty that he could compel himself to take sustenance sufficient for the support of nature. "In this way," says his loving biographer, Eadmer, "he contrived to drag on life through half a year, gradually failing day by day in body, though retaining to the last his mental vigour. Being strong in the spirit, though very weak in the flesh, he could not go to his oratory on foot; but, from his yearning to attend the consecration of the Lord's Body, which he revered with a peculiar feeling of devotion, he caused himself to be carried thither every day in a chair. We who attended on him would fain have had him desist, when we saw how great was the fatigue; but we only succeeded four days before his death."

Eadmer continues:—

"From that time he took to his bed, and, with failing breath, ceased not to exhort all who were privileged to approach him, to live to God, each in his own sphere of labour. Palm Sunday had dawned; and we, as usual, were sitting round his bed. Then said one of us:—'Lord father, we are given to understand that you are going to leave the world for your Lord's Easter court.' 'If such be His will,' he answered, 'I shall gladly obey it. But if He wishes rather that I should abide a little longer with you, at least until I have solved a question on which I am meditating, about the origin of the soul, I should receive it thankfully, for I know not whether any one will take up the work after I

am gone. Indeed, I hope that if I could take food I might yet recover. For I feel no pain anywhere; only, from the weakness of my stomach, which rejects food, I am failing altogether.'

"On the following Tuesday, towards evening, he was no longer able to speak intelligibly. Bishop Ralph, of Rochester, asked him to bestow his absolution and blessing on those who were present, and on his other children, also on the king and queen with their children, and the people of the land who kept themselves under God in his obedience. As if free from suffering he lifted his right hand, and made the sign of the Holy Cross; then he drooped his head and sank down. The congregation of the brethren were already chanting matins in the great church, when one of those who watched about our father took the Book of the Gospels, and read aloud the history of the Passion, which was to be read that day at mass. But when he came to the words, 'Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto Me, so that ye may eat and drink at my table,' Anselm began to draw his breath more slowly. We saw that he was on the point of departure; so we removed him from his bed, and laid him upon sackcloth and ashes. And thus, the whole family of his children being gathered round him, he yielded up his last breath into his Creator's hands, and slept in peace."

He passed away, at daybreak, on the Wednesday before the day of our Lord's Supper, the 21st of

April, in the year of our Lord's Incarnation, 1109; the sixteenth of his pontificate, and the seventy-sixth of his life.

Anselm was canonized in 1494, by Pope Alexander VI. It is a greater honour that in Dante's "Paradise," he is placed among the spirits of light and power in the solar sphere, the most illustrious philosophers, historians, prophets, and "ministers of God's gifts of reason," with Nathan the seer, and S. John Chrysostom, in that circling garland of glorified existences,

"Of roses formed that bloom eternally."

[The contemporary authorities for the life of S. Anselm are:—Eadmer, who was his bosom friend and constant companion; Florence of Worcester, Ordericus Vitalis, William of Malmesbury, and the old "English (or Saxon) Chronicle." In English, the best recent authorities are Dean Church's admirable monograph (ed. 1870); E. A. Freeman, "History of the Norman Conquest;" Sir F. Palgrave, "History of England and Normandy;" Dean Hook, "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. ii.; and Mr. T. Wright, in the "Biographia Britannia Literaria." Compare also the notices in Dean Milman's "History of Latin Christianity;" and Robertson's "History of the Christian Church." Anselm has been a favourite subject with foreign writers, among whom we would recommend, for impartiality and thoroughness, M. de Rémusat, "Saint Anselme de Cantorbéry" (ed. 1868); and Prof. Hasse, "Anselm von Canterbury" (ed. 1852).]

THOMAS BECKET,

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A.D. 1118—1170.

THOMAS BECKET, or, as he is frequently but incorrectly called, Thomas à Becket, was born in the year 1118. It is fitting, perhaps, that the parentage and early years of a man whose career was to terminate in "a martyrdom," and his memory to be hallowed by "a canonization," should be surrounded with an atmosphere of legend and fable. Becket having been exalted as a saint by the Roman Church, his biographers not unnaturally sought to find that element of the marvellous in the circumstances attending his birth and childhood, which the hagiologies showed them in the circumstances of the birth and childhood of his predecessors in the saintly roll. He was not inferior to any of these in the miracles wrought at his tomb; why should he seem inferior in the miracles wrought at his cradle? Therefore a very romantic story, or rather a series of stories, was invented, which, until recently, was accepted even by modern authorities, though it does not appear to have had the slightest foundation

in fact. We are gravely told that his father, Gilbert, while wandering in the Holy Land, was made captive by a Saracen emir, named Amurath. After remaining in slavery for a year and a half, he found favour in the eyes of his lord, and was promoted to wait at his table; a promotion which gave the emir's daughter an opportunity of falling in love with the comely Englishman. One day she contrived to engage him in conversation, asking him from what country and city he came, and what was the nature of the faith professed by Christians. To this Gilbert replied, that he was an Englishman, and that he lived at London; and he added a brief exposition of the Christian creed. "Would you dare to die," said the Saracen maiden, "for your God and for that faith which you profess?" "Most willingly," was the answer; whereupon, as if convinced by his earnestness, she declared that for his sake she would embrace Christianity, if he would promise to make her his wife. Gilbert hesitated to give such a pledge, apprehending some deception; and soon afterwards he succeeded in effecting his escape. The emir's daughter made all haste to follow him; contrived to reach the sea-shore in safety; and embarking on board a vessel, "with some foreigners and traders who understood her language, and were returning to their native country," duly arrived in England. Bidding farewell to her companions, she set out in search of her lover, knowing only two words of English to assist her in her object, "London" and "Gilbert." She reached the capital, and

found her way to Cheapside, where, on the present site of the Mercers' Chapel, stood Gilbert's house. As she roamed to and fro, followed by a train of laughing and mocking boys, who were attracted by her constant repetition of the name of "Gilbert," she was recognized by Gilbert's servant (and former companion in captivity). The sequel of the story is easily guessed. The love-lorn maiden was baptized, named Matilda, properly instructed in Christian doctrine, and married to Gilbert.*

Yet another legend:—

"The Lord knew," said Fitz-Stephen, "and predestined the blessed Thomas before his birth, and in a vision to his mother declared what manner of man her son would become. For in that vision she fancied that she saw the whole Church of Canterbury; and, immediately after the infant's birth, the midwife, lifting him up in her arms, exclaimed, 'I have raised from the ground a future archbishop!' While he still lay in his cradle, his mother dreamed that she reproved the nurse for not placing a coverlet over the baby, and that the nurse replied, 'Nay, my lady, he has a very good one over him.' 'Show it to me,' demanded her mistress. The nurse brought and showed the coverlet, but on attempting to unfold it, found herself unable, and said to the mother, 'It is too large for me to unfold in this bedroom.' 'Nay then,' answered the mother,

* Robert of Gloucester's "Life and Martyrdom of Thomas Becket," p. 8. Cf. Brunton, and the first quadrilogue (edit. by Dr. Giles).

‘come into the hall, and unfold it there.’ The nurse did as she was ordered, and made another effort, but in vain, to unfold the whole of it. In astonishment the mother said, ‘Come out into the market, which at present is empty, and doubtless you will be able to unfold it there.’ But the nurse again found herself baffled, and exclaimed to the mother, ‘It has become so big that I can see no end to it; methinks all England would not be large enough to contain it.’”

What is really certain about the birth of Becket is, that he was the son of Gilbert Becket, an opulent citizen, at one time portreeve or chief magistrate of London, and of his wife Roïsa,* or Roheise. He came of Norman lineage.† His birth took place, it is said, on S. Thomas’s Day, 1118; a day remarkable for a terrific storm of wind. His parents are represented as imitating Zacharias and Elizabeth in their piety and the purity of their lives. And it is recorded, in illustration of the mother’s charity, that at stated times she weighed her little son, putting into the opposite scale bread, meat, money, and clothing, which she afterwards gave to the poor. In the doctrines of the Christian faith he was instructed from his infancy; and was led by his mother to choose the Blessed Virgin as his special patroness and guide, in whom, after Christ, he should set all

* Canon Robertson, however, thinks that Roïsa was the name of Thomas Becket’s grandmother.—(“Life of Becket,” p. 13.)

† *Bec*, or *beck*, means a brook; and *bequet*, or *becket*, a little brook. Compare the words “Caudebec,” “Le Bec,” etc.

his heart.* When ten years old, his education was entrusted to the Prior of S. Mary's, an Augustinian Abbey at Merton in Surrey.† Here, on one occasion, his father, who was visiting him, was observed to prostrate himself reverentially at his feet. "Foolish old man!" exclaimed the prior, "what art thou doing? Why dost thou kneel before thy son? It would be more seemly that he should do thee that honour." "I know, sir," rejoined Gilbert, "what I am doing; for this boy shall be great in the sight of the Lord."‡

From Merton the young Thomas was removed to some of the London schools, where he was distinguished by his precocious talents and great powers of memory. A frequent guest at his father's house was a rich and powerful noble, Richer de l'Aigle, of Pevensey, who, attracted by the clever, handsome, and vivacious lad, treated him with much indulgence, and made him his companion in hawking and hunting excursions. On one of these occasions Becket narrowly escaped drowning in a mill-pond. His biographers agree in representing the incident as miraculous; but are not assured whether the miracle consisted in the miller's accidentally turning off the water at the critical moment, or in the mill-wheels stopping of their own accord.§ The patronage of the rich baron can hardly have proved beneficial

* John of Salisbury, in 319.

† Some remains of this abbey are still extant, and are incorporated in the house where Lord Nelson at one time resided.

‡ William Fitz-Stephen, i. 183.

§ *Ibid*, 183.

to the youth, and helped no doubt to develop his natural taste for the luxurious. But at the age of twenty-one, apparently soon after his mother's death, Becket repaired to Paris, probably to complete his education. On his return, the reduced circumstances of his father rendered it needful for him to obtain employment as clerk and accountant to a kinsman, a wealthy London merchant, named Osbern Huitdeniers, and afterwards, in a similar situation, under the portreeve of London.* This latter position brought him within the current of political affairs. His introduction, however, into public life really dated from his entrance into the service of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, which he owed to the commendation of two of his father's friends, Archdeacon Baldwin and Master Eustace of Boulogne. The archbishop was not slow to recognize the young Becket's intellectual force, and was fascinated, as so many were, by his grace and ease of manner. But the favour shown to him excited the enmity of Roger of Pont l'Evêque, who, by his ingenious calumnies, twice succeeded in obtaining his dismissal. Each time, however, he was restored by the interposition of the primate's brother, Walter, Archdeacon of Canterbury. The archdeacon, in 1147, was raised to the see of Rochester; and the envious Roger succeeded him in the archdeaconry.

But by that time Becket's position was too firmly secured to be influenced by the new archdeacon's

* Cf. Roger of Pontigny and Edward Grim.

machinations. In 1148 he attended the primate at the Council of Rheims. His various important services did not go unrewarded. He held a prebend at St. Paul's and at Lincoln, as well as the benefices of Orford in Kent, and St. Mary-le-Strand, in London.* After this, according to Fitz-Stephen, he procured the archbishop's permission to travel; and studied law for upwards of a year at Bologna and Auxerre. Already he was a man of mark; renowned for his abilities, his tact, and his insight into human character; and scarcely less distinguished for his liberality and splendid living. He was employed on confidential missions of the utmost delicacy, in all of which he was successful. Thus, he persuaded the pope to revoke the commission as legate which he had given to Henry, Bishop of Winchester; and, in 1152, he facilitated Henry II.'s accession to the English throne by inducing Eugenius III. to prohibit the coronation of Eustace of Blois as his father's colleague.

In 1154, on the promotion of Roger of Pont l'Evêque to the see of York, Becket was made Archdeacon of Canterbury;† and to his other preferments were added the provostship of Beverley and the prebend of Hastings. Though this accumu-

* "In course of time," says Fitz-Stephen, "the archbishop ordained him deacon, and made him Archdeacon of Canterbury, which is the highest ecclesiastical dignity in the kingdom, next to the bishops and abbots it brought him in annually one hundred marks."

† Robertson, p. 21.

lation of benefices was held by an ecclesiastic who was only in deacon's orders, it caused no scandal in those days of Church maladministration; and in Becket's case it was certainly necessary to enable him to maintain the pomp and hospitality in which he delighted.

In October, 1154, Henry II. ascended the throne of England. As it was apprehended that he might favour the party opposed to the pretensions of the Church, the primate was advised by the Bishops of Bayeux and Lisieux to provide a counteracting influence in the person of the archdeacon; and, accordingly, Becket was introduced to the king. At this epoch he was about thirty-six years of age, of a handsome countenance, a tall and well-shaped person, fascinating in his manners, fluent of speech, an adept in all the manly exercises of the time; a skilful chess-player, with a passion for everything brilliant and showy; possessed of a great knowledge of men and things; in short, not less fitted to entertain a king in his leisure, than to advise him in the hours devoted to serious affairs. As for the king himself, he was, as Professor Stubbs describes him,* of keen, bright intellect, patient, laborious, methodical, ambitious within certain well-defined limits, tenacious of power, ingenious even to minuteness in expedients, prompt and energetic in execution; at once unscrupulous and cautious. The king and the archdeacon, as friends, might be expected to work together cordially; they were not less

* Stubbs, "Constitutional History," i. 467.

certain, if they became enemies, to exhibit a determined obstinacy in their antagonism. At the outset, however, each saw only the bright side of the other's character; and the friendship which rapidly sprang up seemed firmly cemented by Becket's appointment, early in 1155, to the important office of Chancellor.* We have called it important, though its duties were very different to those which the Chancellor of England nowadays discharges. "The dignity of the chancellor," says Fitz-Stephen, "makes him the second person in the kingdom after the king. He keeps the royal seal, and uses one side of it to seal his own ordinances; the king's chapel is under his care and superintendence; he attends all the royal councils, even without being summoned, and nothing is done without his advice; so that if, by God's mercy, his own needs should not be wanting, the king's chancellor always dies an archbishop, or bishop, if he pleases." Unquestionably, Becket, as Henry's chancellor, was his *alter ego*, his confidential adviser; at once his prime minister, private secretary, confessor, and chaplain. Such a position was full of abundant opportunities to a man like Becket; a man fond of power, but desirous of using it worthily; a man who by nature, no less than by education, was fitted to succeed both as a statesman and diplomatist. That Becket's elevation to this high office

* According to Gervase, the appointment was made on Henry's accession; but this is impossible. It more probably took place at the court which the king held at Christmas, 1154.

was popular with the common people, seems a fact beyond contradiction; and a modern writer accounts for it on the ground that they rejoiced to witness the rise of one of their own race. But no such reason can be accepted. Becket, as we have seen, was not an Englishman, either in his lineage or in his sympathies. His popularity must be ascribed, we imagine, to the satisfaction with which, as a rule, the public always regard the success of a man sprung from a comparatively modest rank; to the influence, always felt by the crowd, of a handsome person and an agreeable address; to the fame of his copious charity; and, perhaps, to a kind of instinct that he would champion the rights of the commonalty against the encroachments of the baronage and the crown.

If was fortunate even for king and kingdom that Becket was elevated to the chancellorship. The country had been reduced to an anarchical condition by the protracted civil war that had occupied the reign of Stephen. Law was set at naught, and order openly violated; the executive, apparently, had lost the power to direct or control. But the energetic chancellor speedily restored peace to the realm. The Flemish mercenaries, whose support had been a grievous tax on the impoverished nation, were summarily dismissed. The barons, conscious that a strong hand was over them, made peace with the king, and surrendered most of their castles and fortresses. The crown recovered many prerogatives that had been disputed or had fallen into abey-

ance. Outlaws and robbers were severely punished; estates were restored to their rightful possessors. The change effected in the course of a single twelve-month was so great as almost to justify the exuberant language of the chronicler:—"The realm waxed rich, and prodigal blessings flowed from the house of plenty. The hills were cultivated, the valleys laughed with golden corn, the fields teemed with cattle, and the folds with sheep." Much was due, in this altered condition of things, to the energy and capacity of the king; but a large share of the merit may justly be claimed by his adviser. We may be sure that it was not without cause that Grim styled him a "second Joseph set over the land of Egypt;" and that Gervase spoke of him as "the king's governor, and, as it were, master."

The friendship between the king and his chancellor increased daily. When the day's tasks were done, they would play together like boys of the same age. Never, says one of the chroniclers, were two better friends in all Christendom. Sometimes Henry rode straight into the hall where Becket sat at table, with an arrow in his hand, as on his return from hunting, or on his departure to the forest, and would either drink a cup of wine, and be gone, or he would lounge across the board and sit down and eat with him. One day in winter, when riding through a London street, Henry saw an old man approaching him, very poor, and thinly clad in a tattered coat. "Do you see yonder varlet?" he said to the chan-

cellor. "Yes," replied Becket. "How poor and infirm he is!" continued the king; "and see, he is almost naked. Would it not be a charity to give him a stout warm cloak?" "Truly it would be; and you, as king, ought to keep such matters in your eye." Presently the poor man came up, asking alms. The king, speaking in a mild tone, inquired if he would like a good cloak; and, turning to the chancellor, exclaimed, "Yours shall be the grace of doing this great act of compassion." Straightway he laid hands on a brave new cloak of scarlet and crimson which the chancellor wore, and strove to pull it off, while its owner endeavoured to retain it. The nobles and knights of their retinue hastened up to discover the cause of the sudden contest, but nobody could tell; only it was clear that both king and chancellor had their hands fully occupied, and seemed on the point of coming to the ground. At length the king prevailed, and handed the fine cloak to the beggar, who, with his unexpected prize, walked off, rejoicing and giving thanks to God.

A vivid presentment of Becket's life, character, and habits as chancellor is furnished by Fitz-Stephen, and we know no reason why it should not be accepted as strictly accurate. There is, indeed, a certain naïveté about it, which vouches for its truthfulness. He asserts that his master's popularity among the clergy, soldiers, and civilians was remarkable. He might have had all the parish churches that were vacant, both in the towns and

castles, for no man would deny him if he only asked (a proof of his power rather than his popularity); but he displayed his magnanimity by repressing selfish desires, and disdaining to deprive poor priests or clerks of the opportunity of gaining those livings for themselves. His great mind aimed rather at great objects, such as the priory of Beverley, the prebend of Hastings, the Tower of London, with the service of the soldiers belonging to it, the custody of Eye, with its "honour" of two hundred and forty soldiers, and the Castle of Berkhamstead.

Retaining the tastes of his youth, he amused himself, when the mood took him, with his hawks and falcons, or hunting dogs, or with the game of chess,—

"When front to front the mimic warriors close,
To check the progress of their mimic foes."

His house and castle were open to all comers, whether they were in reality, or only in seeming, men of good repute. He seldom sat down to dinner without the company of earls and barons whom he had invited. It was considered a sign of his profuseness that he ordered the rooms in which he received his guests to be strewn every winter day with clean straw and hay, and in summer with fresh green boughs and rushes; so that the numerous knights for whom no seats could be found at the tables, might find the floor clean for their reception, and not soil their dainty attire. His board glittered

with vessels of gold and silver, and was supplied with rich dishes and rare wines; not that Becket himself ate or drank largely, but because he had a natural taste for the sumptuous, and an inborn bountifulness of disposition. Whatever the failings of his early manhood, he led a temperate and moral life after his accession to the chancellorship, though, we are told, this was a subject on which the king continually tempted him, day and night. As a man of prudence, and ordained to God's service, he was abstemious in the flesh, and had his loins girded up about him. And as a sagacious statesman, he understood too well the important nature of his duties to expend his time or energies on unprofitable pleasures. For so says the poet:—

“The ever-active man must lack the time
To shoot shafts from the bow of strong desire.”

Such was the esteem in which he was held, and so splendid was the position to which his genius had raised him, that the greatest nobles of England, and of the neighbouring kingdoms, were proud to send their sons to act as his servants. These were handsomely entertained, and liberally educated, and, after receiving the belt of knighthood, were sent back to their parents and kinsmen. The king himself, his sovereign master, entrusted to his charge his son and heir: and the chancellor maintained him in the midst of many sons of the nobility of the same age, and provided him with the tutors and attendants his rank required.

Amidst all this accumulation of worldly distinction, the chancellor in private bared his back to the frequent scourge. To the humble he was humility itself, but stern and haughty to the proud, as if it were his natural disposition,—

“Parcere subjectis, debellare superbos.”

(To spare the prostrate, but depress the proud).

In many ways the ardour of his temperament showed itself. When he crossed the seas, he had six or even more ships to escort him; and all who wished to make the voyage, were carried over at his expense. On reaching port, he was most liberal in his largesse to the master and crew of his vessel. The days were few on which he did not make munificent gifts of horses, hawks, apparel, gold and silver, furniture, or money. “Thus,” remarks Fitz-Stephen, quaintly, “thus did he illustrate the sacred proverb, ‘Some are lavish of their own, yet always abound: some are covetous of what belongs to others, and are always in want.’”

All this generosity and magnificence could not be maintained without a considerable expenditure, which the income of the chancellorship alone (about five shillings a day) was wholly inadequate to supply. And though Becket freely expended the large revenues he drew from his ecclesiastical preferments, even these can hardly have met the need. His household seems to have been established on the most extravagant scale. Such was the multitude of soldiers and men of various qualities who followed him, that the king

himself seemed sometimes to suffer by comparison.* When, in 1159, he went on an embassy to Paris, to solicit the hand of the Princess Margaret (then three months old) for Henry's infant son, he dazzled all eyes by his magnificence. Two hundred horsemen of his own household escorted him, besides soldiers, clerks, butlers, serving-men, knights, and sons of nobles, all festively arrayed in new attire, according to their rank. Four and twenty changes of raiment, intended for presents, elegant curtains, frieze, and foreign skins, cloths and carpets, such as were then in use for embellishing the bed and chamber of a bishop, formed a portion of his baggage. He took with him, also, the finest breeds of dogs and falcons; while in his train went eight *bigæ*, or waggons, drawn by five horses, equal to *destriers*, or war-steeds, in size and strength, well mounted, and caparisoned in uniform harness. Each horse had his proper groom, who was clothed in a new tunic; each carriage had its guards and driver. No king could have travelled in greater pomp; few kings, indeed, could have made so brave a display.

The sumpter-horses, of which there were twelve, carried the chancellor's gold and silver plate, pitchers, basins, salt-cellars, spoons, knives, and other utensils and implements. Two of the waggons were stored with iron-bound casks of English beer: others with different kinds of meat and drink; others again with linen for the person and the table.

* Roger of Pontigny, 103.

One was fitted up as an oratory, a second as a bed-chamber, a third as a kitchen.

The order of entry into town or village was thus designed : the footmen, about two hundred and fifty in number, went first, in groups of six or ten, or more, singing merry ditties of their native country. Then followed the dogs in couples, and the harriers fastened by thongs, with their keepers and whippers-in. Next came the sumpter-horses, skilfully ridden by their grooms ; and with such a ringing of bells and jangling of harness that the French would run out of their houses to inquire what was the meaning of the show. And when they learned that it was the Chancellor of England on an embassy to their sovereign, they would lift their hands in wonder, and exclaim, "How great a ruler must this king of England be, when his chancellor travels in such state !" which, mayhap, was the very conclusion both king and chancellor wished to impress upon them.

After the sumpter-horses marched the squires, carrying the shields of their knightly masters, and leading their pawing and prancing *destriers*. Next, other squires, and a whole train of pages, in gorgeous livery, and the falconers with their dainty birds upon their wrists. Then the standard-bearer, and the upper and lower servants of the chancellor's household, and the knights and clerks, riding two by two ; the procession closing appropriately with the chancellor himself, surrounded by his most intimate friends.

At Paris the ambassador was careful that the

manner of his living should be in harmony with all this preliminary pomp. It was the custom of King Lewis to defray the expenses of the envoys who visited his court; and he had given orders that the Englishman should not be allowed to pay for any article. But Becket, aware of the royal precaution, contrived to baffle it by sending out purveyors in disguise, who bought up large quantities of provisions in all the towns and villages; so that, on arriving at the Hotel of the Temple, which had been set apart for his residence in Paris, he found it stored with three days' supplies for a thousand men. The luxuriousness of his table furnished the gossips of Paris with a constant theme; and one of the ancient stories told of a dish of eels which cost 100s. sterling (equal to about £75 at the present value of money). His liberality was on a similar scale of lavishness. He gave away all his gold and silver plate, his rare and rich garments; to one man a costly furred-cloak, to another a not less costly pelisse; while a third received a palfrey, and a fourth a war-horse.* To the professors and students of the schools he was specially munificent. It is no wonder, therefore, that he rose to the very height of popularity, and that he successfully accomplished the object of his mission.

It was the motive of all Becket's diplomacy to preserve peace between England and France; but notwithstanding the alliance he had concluded, he found, soon after his return to England, that war

* Fitz-Stephen, 199.

could not be prevented. In right of his wife Eleanor, Henry claimed the county of Toulouse as an appanage of the Duchy of Aquitaine. Lewis, as feudal superior, declared that its disposal rested with him; and, naturally unwilling that his powerful rival should increase his Continental possessions, he readily granted the assistance which the Count of Toulouse solicited. Hence the dispute between Henry and the Count seemed likely to swell into a war between England and France. Henry's situation, however, was not without its difficulties. How could he call upon his military vassals in Normandy and England to fight on behalf of the Duke of Aquitaine? "The English baronage," remarks Professor Stubbs,* "might indeed rejoice in an opportunity of displaying their powers before so splendid a king and in a new land;" but the knights and the national force of the country would hardly respond to such a motive. Henry, however, was willing to fight with hired troops, if England and Normandy would provide the funds; and it was evident that not only would hired troops be more manageable during the campaign, but less dangerous when it was over. The result was the institution of scutage; that is, those tenants of the crown who were unwilling or unable to render personal service paid a tax of two marks on the knight's fee.†

* Prof. Stubbs, "Constitutional History," i. 456.

† The importance of this fiscal expedient is well pointed out by Mr. J. R. Green:—"The king thus became master of resources which enabled him to dispense with the military

With the funds thus raised, and with treasure accumulated from other sources, Henry invaded Toulouse. He was accompanied by his whole court, by Malcolm, King of Scotland, Raymond, King of Arragon, William of Boulogne, and the Chancellor Becket, who brought to Henry's aid seven hundred men-at-arms serving at his own expense. To these he afterwards added 1200 knights and 4000 footmen. He himself appeared at their head, in helm and cuirass, and led them to the charge with all the daring and resolution that marked his character.* In a hand-to-hand combat he disarmed and unhorsed a French knight, Engelram de Tric, carrying off his steed as a trophy of his prowess. He assisted in the storming of towns and castles, and on various occasions gave proof of considerable military capacity. When Henry arrived before Toulouse, he found that King Lewis had thrown himself into it, with a few

support of his tenants, and to maintain a force of mercenary soldiers in their place." Mr. Green rightly calls it "a crushing blow" to the baronage; but it may be doubted whether Henry, at the time, fully appreciated its consequences. His necessities drove him to it.

* "Each trooper," says Fitz-Stephen, "received three shillings a day to provide horses and attendants: and the knights all dined at the chancellor's table. These knights were always foremost in the whole English army, doing more gallant deeds than any others, and causing destruction everywhere; for Becket himself was always at their head, encouraging them, and pointing out the path to glory. It was he who gave them the signal to advance or retire; and one day, though a clerk, he charged, with lance in rest, and horse at full speed, a valiant chevalier, Engelram de Tric, who was advancing towards him; and, hurling him from his saddle, carried off his horse in triumph."—Fitz-Stephen, 200.

troops, as the ally of the count. Becket urged him to assault the city, the capture of which would have been easy ; but Henry shrank from so flagrant a violation of feudal duty which might have provided his own barons with a dangerous precedent ; and, therefore, about the end of October, he withdrew his forces. With fire and sword, he ravaged the rest of the count's territory, conquering many castles and strong places ; and having strengthened the fortifications of Cahors, he left the chancellor to garrison it, and with his main army retired into Normandy.

Peace was restored in 1161, and Becket's treaty having been ratified, the chancellor returned home, in the full blaze of diplomatic and military success. At this period he had reached the height of his power. He enjoyed the full confidence of his king, and the love of the commonalty. When Henry placed his son in his hands, it was Becket whom he employed to obtain from the baronage an oath of fealty towards the young prince. In the prelude to John of Salisbury's "*De Nugis Curiarum*," published in 1160, we find a panegyric upon the chancellor which may be taken as representing the popular opinion. He is styled the light of the priesthood, the glory of the English people, the very model of a good king. He it is, we are told, who sweeps aside the unjust laws of the realm, and infuses the spirit of justice into the decrees of a pious sovereign. He it is who always prefers the public weal to private advantage, and what he gives for the good of the

many, esteems as his own treasure. He scatters freely, but scattered riches are multiplied. And as the virtue of his mind, so the comeliness of his person renders him everywhere and to all an object of admiration. Such was Becket in the judgment of a thoughtful contemporary, who does not appear to have seen in the secular tastes and avocations of a nominal ecclesiastic the scandal that has been apparent to modern critics.

In the spring of 1162, Becket was with the king at Falaise, in Normandy. Sending for him privately, Henry informed him that his presence in England was required by urgent political affairs, and that he must prepare for his immediate departure. "But you do not know," he added, "the chief reason why I send you; it is that you may be made Archbishop of Canterbury." * The chancellor thought, or affected to think, that his master was indulging in a royal jest; and gaily answered, pointing to his sumptuous secular attire, "A sorry saint you have selected to figure at the head of the monks of Canterbury!" Discovering that Henry was in earnest, he warned him, it is said, of the probable consequences of the meditated preferment.† "If you do as you say, your mind will be quickly estranged from me, and you will hate me then as

* Archbishop Theobald had died in the previous year. He appears to have been very desirous that Becket should succeed him; probably because he knew Becket better than the king did.

† Herbert of Bosham, 26.

much as you love me now ; for you take to yourself, and will continue to take to yourself, an authority in Church matters to which I should not consent, and many persons will be prompt to stir up strife between us." Becket, as a man of unusual sagacity, well acquainted with the king's character, and holding views of his own respecting the proper position of the Church, may have foreseen that as archbishop he would surely come into collision with his sovereign.* He knew Henry, and he knew himself. He could not have been ignorant of Henry's opinions on the relations which ought to exist between the civil and the ecclesiastical power ; or of his determination to assert the authority of the Crown over the clergy as he had done over the baronage. We believe, therefore, that he was sincere in his desire to refuse the archbishopric ; and the wonder is that Henry should have persisted in forcing it upon him. Yet to De Luci, to the chief justiciary, who was about to accompany Becket to England, he said, " Richard, were I lying dead on my bier, would you endeavour that my first-born, Henry, should be raised to the throne ? " " To the utmost of my power," was the reply. " Then," rejoined the king, " I would have you take no less care for the promotion of the chancellor to the see of Canterbury." To the remonstrances of the bishops, made through Becket's great enemy, Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of Hereford,†

* John of Salisbury, 322.

† Mr. Hurrell Froude thus describes Bishop Foliot :—" Gilbert Foliot, it seems, though wrapped in a hair shirt, and reposing on

he gave no heed. The monks of Canterbury complained, that it was monstrous to seat in the chair of S. Augustine, a man who was rather a soldier than a priest, and had devoted himself to hunting and hawking instead of the study of Holy Scripture. But the king persisted. The truth seems to have been that his attachment to Becket prevailed over his usually clear judgment, and that he relied too implicitly on Becket's devotion to the master who had loaded him with favours.*

At the repeated solicitations of the papal legate, Cardinal Henry of Pisa, Becket withdrew his refusal to accept the archbishopric; and his appointment was formally confirmed by the king's council. On Whitsun-day he was admitted to priest's orders by Bishop Walter of Rochester. The election by the prior and monks having been duly completed, the Bishop of Winchester, addressing Prince Henry in the name of the Episcopate, requested that the

a bed of straw, felt the charms of home as strongly, and was as little disposed to sacrifice peace for principle, as though he had been spell-bound amid the softer enchantments of domestic blessedness. Few as were the charms which earth possessed for him, yet those few could place him within the power of circumstances, and undermine the independence of his character."—"Remains," ii. 45.

* "I never loved a man as I loved that man;
Nor any loved me better. Many a time
In years gone by, I marked him on me cast
An eye that, up and down the measure took
Of my hid soul, yet ended with a smile,
As though, beyond the ill, it kenned some good
I knew not of myself."

Aubrey de Vere, "S. Thomas of Canterbury," Act ii. Scene 1.

archbishop-elect might be released from all obligations contracted in his secular office; to which the prince, in his father's name, consented. Soon afterwards, all the bishops assembled at Canterbury, and with them a large number of abbots and ecclesiastics of every degree, eager to be present at the consecration of so powerful a personage; to participate in the prayers that would there be offered, and the blessings that would there be bestowed. On the appointed day appeared Becket attended by a crowd of the clergy and other persons of dignity. Robed in gorgeous pontificals the bishops went forth to meet him, with a train of monks and priests, and an immense following of the common people, who welcomed him with every kind of honour and with acclamations of joy. So tumultuous was their delight that no language can describe it. But to these signs of the popular satisfaction Becket paid no apparent attention. He advanced on foot, in humility and contrition of heart; his head bowed, his eyes filled with tears; with no thought of the honour, but a profound sense of the burden he had taken upon him. The ceremony of consecration was performed by the Bishop of Winchester; and on its completion messengers, among whom was Becket's secretary and confidential friend, John of Salisbury, were despatched to Montpelier to obtain from the pope, Alexander III., the *pallium*, or pall, which symbolized the connection between metropolitanical Canterbury and the Roman see. After a brief delay, caused by the greed of the cardinals of

the papal court, the pall was granted, and the envoys returned with it to England, where it was received by Becket with the profoundest reverence.

We enter now upon the second stage of Becket's career. We have seen him as the king's minister; we have next to contemplate him as the archbishop, the ruler and yet the servant of the Church. It is this second period of his life which has chiefly provoked controversy. Almost all writers agree in praising the ability and public spirit he exhibited as the Chancellor of England, and ascribe to him a principal share in the great reforms that illustrated the earlier years of Henry II.'s reign. But from the moment that he assumed the archiepiscopal power and dignity, historians and biographers draw off into hostile camps, and range under opposite banners as his admirers or censors. His mode of life, his change of conduct, his motives, his actions, the principles of his policy, the circumstances of his death—all have called forth a flood of praise and criticism, panegyric and detraction. Was he or was he not a hypocrite? Was his line of conduct dictated by zeal for the Church, or a lust of personal aggrandisement? Was he consciously or unconsciously involved in a struggle for the preservation of the liberties of the common people? How far did he deserve the popular sympathy which undoubtedly he commanded? These are but a few of the questions connected with Becket's career as Archbishop of Canterbury.

It is commonly represented that immediately on

assuming the mitre, Becket the man of the world, gave place to Becket the saint. Men have laughed at the suddenness of the conversion, and because of its suddenness have doubted its sincerity. Other instances, however, could easily be given of the sobering effect which the possession of immense power and the assumption of great responsibilities exercises upon a sympathetic temperament, and a mind not wholly insensible to the higher influences. It is frequently found that a man rises at once to the elevation of a great trust. But, again, admitting that a change took place, we may reasonably inquire whether it was so absolute as some writers have pretended. Allowance must surely be made for the inflated language of monastic biographers. "I proceed," says Herbert of Bosham, "to describe one who had now become a new man." A new man! Is this true? Did Becket in reality undergo a transformation of character, temper, mood, will, and aspiration? Or did he remain the same man, only adapting himself to new conditions?—the same man, only elevated and purified, as we have hinted, by a sense of fresh and solemn obligations? We suppose that almost every man, if suddenly placed in the chair of S. Augustine, would awake to a consciousness of the grandeur of its traditions and the sacredness of its duties. When Herbert of Bosham continues:—"Taught by the grace of Him who created and fashioned mankind, I will change my style as I best am able, and will delineate the heavenly likeness of the heavenly one, even that

pontifical form so conspicuous in Christ's pontiff, that the men of this generation, who are now alive, and all who may live in future times, and especially pontiffs, may have an example to imitate and admire; yea, which ought rather to be painted in vermilion than written with a pen,"—when, we say, Herbert of Bosham employs these high-flown expressions, are we to construe them literally? The truth is, that no miraculous metamorphosis occurred at all; and such change as there was did not take place instantaneously, but was a gradual development, extending over many months. Becket the archbishop, was Becket the chancellor—the same man,—the same in the quickness of his apprehension, in the firmness of his will, in the boldness of his nature, in the fire of his temper; graver, more in earnest, more vigorous in self-discipline, less given to outward pomp; but Thomas Becket still; even as when—

“Young in face, and chancellor, not bishop,
He with the pageant of his greatness filled
The broad eye of the world.”

Though, as archbishop, he wore sackcloth, his dress and the dress of his retinue, were still conspicuous for their splendour. Though at times he was content to mortify his flesh upon bread and water, his table was generally spread with delicate fastidiousness. His very asceticism was not the mushroom growth of a day; but as is the case with most impressionable and enthusiastic natures, his new life gradually absorbed him more and more, and

his increasing perception of the importance of his work rendered him more and more vigorous in its accomplishment. Still, however, he chose, as Mr. Hurrell Froude remarks, his companions for their rank and intellectual accomplishments, his studies for their political and philosophical rather than their religious character; and the change which he carried out in his pursuits and manner of living was nothing more than the change his dignity and occupation would suggest to a man of refined taste and lofty ambition. It has been pointed out that, two years after his consecration, the pious John of Salisbury ventured to chide his illustrious friend for preferring secular literature to psalms and sermons. Had John of Salisbury believed the archbishop to be the sour saint and grim ascetic some modern writers paint him, his advice would have been both unbecoming and unnecessary; while, if he had regarded him as a crafty pretender to sanctity, it is certain that he would have addressed him in a less affectionate and cordial tone. After all, it is not claiming much clearness of judgment or rightness of thinking for Becket, when we assume that the avocations permissible to the servant of the king he at once recognized to be inappropriate for the servant of the Church; that the conduct which could give no offence in the chancellor might justly earn condemnation in the bishop.

The description which Fitz-Stephen furnishes of the primate is as full as it is interesting, and is intelligible enough when we understand it as

applying to his whole archiepiscopate, and not to its opening days. For the convenience of the reader we shall give it in a condensed form, supplemented by a few details from other sources.

The archbishop, he says, at his consecration was anointed with the visible unction of the Divine mercy; and, putting off the secular man, was clothed in Christ Jesus. Devoting himself to a consideration of the best manner in which he might discharge his new and solemn functions, he kept a diligent watch over his mind; his words assumed a serious tone for the edification of his hearers; his deeds were deeds of piety and mercy; his thoughts were thoughts of equity and justice. Desirous of avoiding men's eyes, until the new plant which Divine grace had set in his breast should be more deeply rooted, so that it need not fear the blasts of the world, at first he made no change in his attire;* in fact he delayed it, until the monks murmured because he wore his secular dress in the chair, and one of them was instructed in a dream to warn him of his offence.† The attire which he then donned was so ordered as to show neither an affected shabbiness nor an elaborate finery.‡ That he might be in conformity with his clerks he wore a canon's robe, and underneath it, as head of the monks of Christ Church, a monastic habit, with, next to his skin, a garment of coarse sackcloth, reaching to his thighs, which he changed once in forty days. His diet was of the

* Edward Grim.

† Roger of Pontigny.

‡ Herbert of Bosham.

severest character; he partook of few dishes, and but little of any; but he insisted that those put before him should be choice and delicate. Herbert of Bosham tells us that a stranger monk, who, one day, was the archbishop's guest, laughed at the peculiar daintiness of his food. "If I mistake not, brother," said the primate, sharply, "there is more greediness in your eating of your beans than in my eating of this pheasant." His general drink, according to Fitz-Stephen, was water in which fennel had been boiled; but other biographers represent that the weakness of his stomach rejected water, and that he took a little wine for the same reason which induced S. Paul to recommend it to Timothy.

The archbishop's day was spent in this wise:—He rose at cock-crow, and chanted the appropriate office; confessed his sins; and submitted his back to the lash of discipline—a mortification which he underwent again and yet again. Then, in company with Herbert of Bosham, or some other of his clerks, he devoted a certain time to the study of Scripture; afterwards shutting himself up in private until nine o'clock, when he proceeded to celebrate or hear mass. He did not lengthen out this service, as some priests were wont to do* to show their piety, but with eager devotion went through it swiftly; weeping and sighing copiously, as if the very sacrifice of the cross rose before his eyes. After leaving the chapel he repaired to his archiepiscopal court, where suitors were amazed at the disinterestedness which

* Herbert of Bosham.

refused all gifts except those that could not with decency be declined, and the remainder of the forenoon was given up to judicial or ecclesiastical business. The afternoon seems to have been devoted to going abroad, or receiving visitors, or to the various engagements that necessarily fell upon a personage in Becket's illustrious position. In the evening he saw his friends, or studied, or engaged in conversation with his chaplains, listening to their discussions, and putting questions to them.

His munificence in almsgiving was such as might be expected from his generosity of disposition. He would frequently send four or five marks, and sometimes meat and provisions, to the hospitals and poor colleges. His predecessor, Theobald, had doubled the regular alms given by former wearers of the metropolitan mitre ; and Thomas, in a spirit of pious emulation, doubled Theobald's bounty. In order to provide funds for this lavish charity, he set apart a tenth of all he received. In his secret cell, and on his knees, he daily washed the feet of thirteen beggars in the name of Christ ; supplying them afterwards with ample refreshment, and upon each one bestowing four shillings.* When prevented from discharging this duty in person, he was careful to see that it was done by deputy. It was wonderful, says his biographer, how abundantly, in his

* Four pieces of silver, says Fitz-Stephen. Compare John of Salisbury and Herbert of Bosham. The feet-washing seems to have been a regular duty on the part of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

lonely hours, he shed tears; a sign of the extreme excitability engendered by the pressure on his restless intellect of protracted anxieties. He received into his house the wanderer and the pauper, and supplied many with clothes to endure the severities of winter. At Canterbury he was wont to take his seat in the cloisters like one of the monks, studying some useful work; after which he would visit the sick, to hear their wishes, that he might see to their fulfilment. He was the husband of the widow, the father of the orphan, the comforter of the oppressed; but though to the meek he was courteous and humble, the arrogant he treated with cold severity.

King Henry soon received a conclusive proof of Becket's sincerity in the warning he had addressed to him; for he hastened to resign his office of chancellor, which the king had intended him to hold in conjunction with the primacy, that he might the more effectually carry out the royal policy as regarded both the Church and the State. That the resignation was intended and understood as a release from submission to the royal claims, is evident from the outbreak of fiery wrath which it provoked in the king. He sarcastically inquired, Why did not Becket also resign his archdeaconry? The reasons are obvious; first, it was an ecclesiastical preferment with ecclesiastical duties; and, second, Becket did not wish it at that moment bestowed on one of the king's creatures. But in so far as it provided his enemies with a weapon, his retention of the office was as impolitic as was his next proceed-

ing—the resumption of the lands belonging to the see of Canterbury, which had been alienated to lay hands. The alienation was undoubtedly unjust, but instead of resorting to violent measures of ejection, Becket should have gone before the proper courts. Nor is it a sufficient justification of his high-handedness that, as Fitz-Stephen alleges, he had previously obtained a licence from the king to resume the archiepiscopal estates. Henry, we may be sure, never intended that the licence should be used, or abused, as Becket used, or abused it. These actions, dictated by the archbishop's arbitrariness of temper, strengthened the injurious representations of his many enemies. The ungodly, as John of Salisbury tells us, endeavoured, by their malicious interpretations, to darken the change which the right hand of the Most High had wrought, ascribing to superstition the primate's stricter life. His zeal for justice they traduced as cruelty; his anxiety for the interests of the Church they attributed to greed; his scorn of worldly favour they declared to be a hunting after glory; his comely splendour was falsely called pride. It was said to be a mark of arrogance that he followed the will which had been taught him from above; and it was accounted a token of temerity that in the upholding of his rights he often seemed to go beyond the limits of his predecessors. Nothing could he say or do that was not perverted by the malice of the wicked, inasmuch that they succeeded in persuading the king that, should the archiepiscopal power increase, the

royal dignity would assuredly be brought to naught; that unless he looked to it for himself and his heirs, the Crown would fall to the disposal of the clergy, and kings would reign only so long as archbishops should please.

It would seem, however, that when the king and the primate met at Southampton, at Christmas, 1162, the breach between them was partly closed, and Henry left his heir-apparent still in his old favourite's hands; and when, a few months later, the archbishop, on starting to attend the Council of Tours, resigned the young prince's charge, he and the king spent a few days together in the most familiar and cordial intercourse. His journey to Tours wore all the pomp of a royal progress. He was everywhere received with the honour usually paid to a sovereign. At Gravelines he was welcomed by the Earl of Flanders, and the nobles and gentry thronged his presence-chamber, as at a king's levee. When he approached Tours, priests and citizens, knights and nobles, and all the cardinals, except two, who remained in formal attendance on the pope, hastened to offer him their homage. On his entering the palace in which Pope Alexander lodged, the pontiff, "who scarce riseth up to any one," left his private apartment, and received him in the hall. No doubt these distinctions were appreciated by Becket; for, like many men who are fond of power, he was fond also of its external signs.

His presence was not unwelcome to the pope. The Roman Church was then in a state of schism;

the Emperor Barbarossa espousing the claims of the Cardinal Octavian, who, in 1159, had been elected in opposition to Alexander, under the title of Victor IV. Becket's presence, therefore, was welcome as a sign of the adhesion of the Church of England. In addition, the dignity of his position, his influence with Henry, and the force of his character, combined to elevate him in the eyes of the pontiff; and when the Council assembled, on May 19th, in the Church of St. Maurice, the London citizen's son was seated in the place of honour on the pope's right hand.*

It is significant of the ideal of Church policy which he had already formed that he endeavoured to procure the canonization of his predecessor Anselm. In this he failed, but he obtained a confirmation of the privileges of the metropolitan see. The most important result of the Council was, however, so far as Becket was concerned, the effect produced upon his ardent genius by the sermon preached by Arnulf, Bishop of Lisieux, in which he eloquently inveighed against the tyranny of the princes who strove to endanger the independence, and break up the unity of the Church. The orator thought only of the emperor and his allies; but Becket applied his glowing language to his own sovereign, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that it strengthened him in his determination to oppose the encroachments, as he considered them, of the secular power.

On his return to England, no immediate outbreak

* Herbert of Bosham, 89.

took place between King Henry and himself. They both agreed in the promotion of Gilbert Foliot to the see of London, and Henry attended the consecration of the Abbey of Reading, as well as the solemn ceremony of the translation of the remains of S. Edward the Confessor to their splendid tomb in Westminster. But the superficial character of this apparent amity was speedily revealed. In council at Woodstock (1164) Henry proposed that a certain payment previously made to the sheriffs of the counties should thenceforth be transferred to the revenues of the Crown. The proposition was illegal and unconstitutional; yet no one but Becket ventured to oppose it. His arguments were so strong and palpable that they naturally awakened the royal wrath. "By God's eyes!" exclaimed Henry, with one of the strange Plantagenet oaths, "the money shall be paid as revenue, and entered in the king's books." "By God's eyes!" retorted Becket, "no such payment shall be made from all my lands, and of the Church's right—not one penny!" The king's project was defeated, and thenceforth, according to Edward Grim, he began to direct his anger against the clergy, believing any calumny he might cast upon them would fall more particularly on the archbishop as their head.

Another subject of quarrel immediately arose. Becket had conferred the living of Eynesford, which belonged to the see of Canterbury, on a priest named Lawrence. The lord of the manor, claiming the right of nomination, expelled Lawrence's people, and

was straightway excommunicated by the archbishop. He applied for protection to the king, who commanded the archbishop to give him absolution. It was not for the king, replied Becket, to issue such a command; excommunication and absolution were strictly matters of spiritual jurisdiction. Henry then asserted the principle laid down by William the Conqueror, that the tenants-in-chief of the Crown could not be excommunicated without the sovereign's permission. Unwilling to hazard an open rupture, and suspecting, perhaps, that the lord of the manor's claim was not wholly groundless, Becket at length conceded the required absolution. "He has done it so tardily," said the king, "that now I do not thank him for it."

We must henceforth prepare to look upon Henry and the archbishop as the leaders of two hostile factions, hostile in principle and in object, the respective watchwords of which were "the Crown" and "the Church." In judging the contest that arose between them, we must be careful not to estimate the merits and the men of the twelfth century from the standpoint of the nineteenth. Nowadays the claim which Becket put forward on behalf of the Church would be regarded as monstrous and unjustifiable; in Becket's time it involved the claim of the common people. In vindicating the freedom of the Church, Becket was vindicating the freedom of the subject, and unconsciously assisting in the development of constitutional government. The prelacy and the people were thus bound together

in a struggle against the aggression of the Crown, and the insolence of the baronage. With the accession of the Angerlin dynasty, as Mr. Freeman remarks, the purely Norman period of our history came to an end. Norman and Englishman alike were called upon to oppose "the perpetual intrusion of fresh shoals of foreigners," a process which threatened a second conquest. As a natural result, Norman and Englishman, forgetting their differences, united in resistance to the common enemy. In the reign of Henry II. the struggle was veiled under an ecclesiastical form. Becket, of English birth, but of Norman descent, won the enthusiastic devotion of the English people in a contest in which a wonderful instinct told them that their best interests were engaged. It was a contest against Caesarism;* a contest against the deliberate design of the Crown to monopolize all power, all influence, all law, all order. And, therefore, as Macaulay observes, it was a national as well as a religious feeling which drew such multitudes to the shrine of Becket at Canterbury. He was not only the saint and martyr, but the first Englishman who, since the Conquest, had been terrible to the foreign tyrants.

For the part which he was called upon to play Becket was admirably fitted. His was the warrior's "plain heroic magnitude of mind," with something of the statesman's breadth of view and grasp of purpose. His was the ardent and impetuous spirit,

* It must be remembered that Henry did not seek the reform, but the robbery and humiliation of the Church.

which no obstacles could break down, and no dangers overwhelm ; his, too, a remarkable power of adapting himself to all people and all occasions ; a fine strong sense of duty which inspired him even in the darkest hour of adversity and trial ; and a practical energy which moulded and adapted circumstances to its own object. His warmth of temper sometimes led him into violence, and his firmness occasionally degenerated into obstinacy ; but these errors might be forgotten and forgiven in the consideration of his generosity, trustfulness, and courage. "He was impetuous in temper," says Mr. Aubrey de Vere "but he was humble also, and required his attendants to address him with the same entire frankness which he himself used with all, from the lowest to the highest. He was, though a firm defender of the Church's rights when assailed, by no means a one-sided man. The fanatics of his day called him secular in his views. In his estimate the State stood at a height immeasurably more exalted than that commonly claimed for it in our days ; but there is a comparative as well as an absolute greatness ; and he believed also that that Christian religion which raises the nations must ever itself remain, for their sake, as well as from inherent necessity, exempt from their contact. Above all, Becket was a man of passionate and constant affections. He never ceased to love the king, and Mr. Freeman maintains that the king, too, remembered their old friendship. Occasionally, at least, he did so ; and perhaps that affection returned to him in power after Becket's

death, and prompted his repeated visits to the martyr's grave." *

The pretended or ostensible cause of the long contention between Henry and the archbishop was the vexed question of clerical immunities. The king claimed the right to try the clergy—a term then applied to all tonsured individuals—in his criminal courts. "Ever since the Conqueror," says Professor Stubbs, "had divided the spiritual and temporal courts of justice, the treatment of criminal clerks had been a matter of difficulty; the lay tribunals were prevented by the ecclesiastical ones from enforcing justice, and the ecclesiastical ones were able only to inflict spiritual penalties. The reasonable compromise which had been propounded by the Conqueror himself in the injunction that the lay officials should enforce the judgments of the bishops, had been rendered inefficacious by the jealousies of the two estates; and the result was that in many cases grossly criminal acts of clerks escaped unpunished, and gross criminals eluded the penalty of their crimes by declaring themselves clerks." In a council at Westminster, to which the bishops and abbots were duly summoned, October 1163, the king proposed as a remedy for this condition of affairs, that when clerks were detected in crimes, and convicted, either by the judgment of the court or by their own confession, they should be deprived of their orders, and given up to the king's officers, to receive corporal chastisement, without

* Aubrey de Vere, "S. Thomas of Canterbury," pp. 28-30.

the protection of the Church.* The bishops seem to have been disposed to consent, on the ground that if clerks were not deterred from evil doing by their greater privileges, they deserved a severer punishment than laymen; but Becket, relying on the arguments of the canonists, and detecting in Henry's proposal a blow at the privileges of the Church, strongly resisted it. He protested against the injustice, he said, both before God and man, of inflicting two punishments for one offence. It was sufficient that the criminal should be degraded; but if he offended again, he offended as a layman, and was answerable to the king's jurisdiction. Obviously, Becket's reasoning was imperfect, and implied an encroachment of the spiritual on the secular power. The Church takes cognizance of offences committed against the Church, or its Founder; the State, of offences committed against society. And the character of the sentences which they respectively pass is, or should be, different. Those which the Church inflicts are spiritual; those inflicted by the State are corporal. The truth is, that Becket's opposition to the royal demand sprang, not so much from any conviction of the error or injustice of the demand, as from a belief that it was the first of a series of encroachments on the Church's liberties. Whether he was right or wrong in this belief, it must be owned that his choice of a battle ground was unfortunate.†

* Roger of Hoveden, 282.

† Archdeacon Churton argues that the punishments inflicted

Animated by their primate's courage, the bishops informed the king that they would not yield an unqualified assent to his proposal. Incensed at their apparent unanimity, he asked them one by one whether they would obey the "royal customs,"—the customs of his ancestors. Becket replied that they would, "saving always their own order;" and a similar answer was returned by each bishop, except that Hilary of Chichester, for "salvo ordine" substituted "bonâ fide." The verbal change provoked Henry to one of his wild Plantagenet excesses of wrath, which, while they lasted, transformed him into a raging lion, with his eyes "quasi scintillantes ignem, et in impetu fulminantes." * He poured out upon Hilary the most furious abuse, and asserted that the bishops had joined in a league against him, and that there was poison in their words. "By God's eyes!" he exclaimed, "ye shall say nought of your order; but ye shall agree to my constitutions and without reservation!" Without a word of fare-

by the Church were exceedingly severe; and points out that certain clerks were condemned to deprivation of all their dignities, and to confinement in a monastery for life under a rigid system of penance. But, as Canon Robertson says, this allegation by no means meets the case. "The ecclesiastical discipline would seem to have been much neglected, and, at all events, it was found insufficient to restrain from frequent crime. Whatever it may have been, it is certain that it was looked on, both by clergy and by laity, as less severe than the secular punishments; and it is certain that it was grievously ineffective."—Archdeacon Churton, "The Early English Church," p. 345; Canon Robertson, "Becket: a Biography," p. 86.

* Peter of Blois, Epist. lxvi.

well salutation he broke up the council ; and, on the following morning, demanded of Becket the surrender of the castles of Eye and Berkhamstead, the charge of which he had formally conferred upon him.

Soon afterwards he summoned the archbishop to his presence at Northampton, and reproached him bitterly with his ingratitude. Having enumerated his many acts of grace and favour, he concluded by asking, "Were you not the son of one of my villeins?" "Truly," replied Becket, quoting Horace, "I am not sprung from royal ancestors (*atavis editus regibus*); but neither was the blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, to whom the Lord deigned to give the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the principality of the whole Church." "*He*," retorted the king, "*he* died for his Lord." "And I, too," replied Becket, calmly, "will die for my Lord when the time shall come." "You place too much reliance on the ladder by which you have mounted." "I put my trust in the Lord; on Him I lean; for cursed is he who putteth his trust in man." The interview closed without bringing either Becket or the king any nearer to the other's position.*

Open war was now declared, and at first the advantage was entirely on the king's side. Many among the bishops were well disposed to concede privately all that Henry had asked; and Becket's enemies, Roger of York, Foliot of London, and Hilary of Chichester, secretly formed a party for the purpose of crushing the primate's independence.

* Roger of Pontigny, pp. 118, 119.

The Archbishop of York proceeded to reassert the old claim for his see as equal in dignity to that of Canterbury; and Foliot pretended that the see of London was independent of the metropolitan's jurisdiction, on account of its venerable antiquity.* Failing the support of his own brethren, and surrounded by a network of hostile intrigue, Becket for a moment shrank from pursuing the campaign on which he had entered; and being strongly pressed by the great barons and the chief officers of the royal court, as well as by an envoy from the pope, and the Bishop of Hereford, he at length gave way. In an interview with the king at Oxford he intimated his submission. Henry immediately declared that inasmuch as he had signified his refusal of the Royal Customs in public, in public he must accept them; † a declaration which took Becket by surprise, as he had been led to understand that the king would be content with a purely formal acknowledgment.

In January, 1164, at the royal palace of Clarendon, near Salisbury, the prelates and barons assembled, under the presidency of John of Oxford, an ecclesiastic and a politician greatly in the royal confidence. The business of the Council lasted, it is believed,

* He declared, according to John of Salisbury, that London in the days of old had been the seat of an arch-flamen of Jupiter.

† "You must make this statement publicly, for it was in public that you opposed my wishes, and in public you must assent to them. Let us therefore summon a council for a certain day. I will convoke my barons, and you, the bishops and clergy, so that for the future no person shall presume to disobey my laws."—Edward Grim. Compare Roger of Pontigny, p. 526.

over three days. On the first day Becket protested his ignorance of the particular constitutions of the realm which he and his fellow-prelates were expected to observe. These, on the second day, were accordingly communicated, and were found to contain many "heretical provisos," and encroachments on the privileges of the Church, invented, if Herbert of Bosham may be believed, by the archbishop's enemies. On the third day they were reduced into writing by command of the king, in order that no one might in after time allege against him the introduction of novelties. In a written form they consisted of sixteen clauses, which the prelates and nobles present were required to sign. "To avoid all further dispute and contention," said the king, "it is my will that the archbishop do now set his seal to these my constitutions." Becket immediately replied, "And I declare, by God Almighty, that I will never affix my seal to constitutions such as these." He added, that to approve of constitutions so modified and enlarged, and reduced into so stringent a form, was more than he had undertaken.

In sullen anger Henry abruptly left the hall, followed by some of his principal barons. What followed we learn from a letter which Foliot afterwards addressed to the primate:—*

"We stood by you then," he writes, "because it seemed to us (the bishops) that you were standing boldly in the spirit of the Lord. We stood immov-

* The authenticity of this letter (Gibb. Fol., Epist. cxliv.) is admitted by Dr. Pauli and Dean Milman.

able, and showed no sign of alarm. We stood steadfast, to the ruin of our fortunes, and prepared to encounter bodily tortures or exile, or, if God so pleased, death. Was ever father more loyally supported by his sons in adversity? Who could be more unanimous than we were? We were all confined in one chamber, and on the third day the princes and nobles of the kingdom, bursting with fury, broke in upon our deliberations, flung back their cloaks, and stretching out their hands towards us, exclaimed, 'Listen, ye who spurn the king's statutes, and disobey his commands. These hands, these arms, these bodies of ours, belong not to us, but to King Henry, and are ready at his word to avenge his wrongs and work his will, whatever that may be. His commands will be law and justice in our eyes. Retract, then, your ill-advised decision, and submit to his will, that you may avoid the danger before it be too late.'"

The Council being dissolved the prelates separated; and when no longer held together by the encouragement derived from numbers, began to give way. Jocelyn of Salisbury and William of Norwich implored the primate to make a second concession, and their entreaties were supported by the Earl of Cornwall, the king's uncle, and the Earl of Leicester, the co-justiciary of England. At first he was inflexible; but after a private interview with two of the most powerful Knight-Templars, who, it is supposed, conveyed to him some secret pledge or assurance from the king, intended to satisfy his

scruples, he yielded. Returning to the Episcopal conclave, he said, "It is God's will that I should perjure myself! For the present I submit, and incur perjury, to repent of it hereafter as best I may." His hearers, says Foliot, were amazed at these words, and gazed one upon another, groaning in spirit at the downfall of him whom they had admired as a champion of virtue and constancy.

In the hearing of all, Becket promised, on his priestly word, to observe the constitutions "loyally and with grave faith," and, at the king's request, he charged the other prelates, on their canonical obedience, to do the same. But when he was asked to affix his seal to the written document, he drew back. In the opinion of the age this was a more solemn and binding action than any verbal promise. Moreover, as Robertson remarks, the proposal was inconsistent with the assurances he had repeatedly received from persons professing to be specially authorized, that the king would acquiesce in the slightest nominal submission, so that it took place in the presence of the nobles. Becket extricated himself from the difficulty by pleading that for so important a matter a little consideration was necessary, and requested permission to carry home with him a copy of the roll. A second copy was furnished to the Archbishop of York, and a third was prepared for deposit in the royal archives.

Then Becket and his attendants turned their backs on the royal palace, and rode off towards Winchester, Becket's soul convulsed with shame at

his vacillation and weakness. For some distance he remained wrapt in a melancholy silence, until Herbert of Bosham addressed him :—" My lord," he said, " why are you so dejected? You were not wont to be so gloomy, but now you say not a word to any one of us." " What wonder," cried the archbishop, " when I cannot but believe that it is on account of my sins the Church is reduced to this bondage. My predecessors governed the Church successfully, and guided her through many and great dangers ; and, now, instead of reigning triumphantly, she is reduced to servitude, and all, all for me, O miserable wretch! Would that I had perished! Would that no human eye had ever beheld me! But it is just that the Church should suffer in my time, for I was taken from the court to fill this station ; not from the cloister, nor from a religious house, nor from the school of the Saviour ; but from the palace of the Cæsar—I, a proud and vain man,—I, a feeder of birds, and I was suddenly made a feeder of men ; I, a patron of sinners and a follower of hounds, became a shepherd over so many souls! I neglected my own vineyard, and yet was entrusted with the care of so many others. My past life wandered undoubtedly from the path of salvation ; and behold the fruits? It is evident that I am entirely abandoned by God, and even unworthy to be ejected from the hallowed see in which I have been placed."

With the light of modern knowledge, and the experience of history to assist us in forming a judg-

ment, we can hardly venture to condemn the object which Henry proposed to himself in the Constitutions of Clarendon. They were, in effect, a deliberate assertion of the royal supremacy, and in principle anticipated the movement, which, under the Tudor sovereigns, culminated in the Reformation. Under those Constitutions, Henry would have disposed of all ecclesiastical dignities by his own authority, would have prevented appeals to Rome, and have become virtually "the head of the Church."* The policy had the merit of being bold and intelligible; but it was a policy for which the age was not ripe, the country not prepared. We must remember that to Becket's contemporaries the so-called "liberties of the Church" were not so objectionable as they appear to modern critics. It has been pointed out by an able writer† that the modern idea of government is an equal system of law for every part of the territory and every class of the nation. On the other hand, in the middle ages, every class of men, every district, every city endeavoured to isolate itself within an exclusive jurisprudence. Every town was fain to approach as nearly as it could to the condition of a separate republic; every province to obtain a judicial system independent of the rest of the kingdom. It was, therefore, no great anomaly for the clergy to enjoy a jurisdiction of their own. Again: it must be remembered that ecclesiastical privileges were not so exclusively

* Lord Campbell, "Lives of the Chancellors," i. 80.

† "National Review," x. 343, 344.

priestly privileges as some writers represent. They sheltered not only ordained ministers, but ecclesiastical officers of every kind over which the Church Courts extended their ægis, also over the widow and the orphan. So that the privileges for which Becket contended were privileges which delivered a large part of the people, and that the most helpless, from the tyrannical grasp of the royal tribunals, and handed them over to the milder jurisdiction of the bishop.*

* The very favourable view of the Constitutions taken by Professor Stubbs may be set before the reader:—"They are sixteen," he says, "in number, and profess to be a codification of the usages of Henry I. on the points in dispute between the Crown and the Church. They relate to such matters as advowsons and presentations, churches in the king's gift, the trials of clerks, security to be taken of the excommunicated, trials of laymen for spiritual offences, excommunication of tenants-in-chief, license of the clergy to go abroad, ecclesiastical appeals not to be carried beyond the archbishop without the king's consent, the title to ecclesiastical estates, the baronial duties of the prelates, the election to bishoprics and abbacies, the king's right to the property of felons placed under the protection of the Church, and the ordination of villeins." While some of these Constitutions only state in legal form the customs which had been adopted by the Conqueror and his sons, others seem to be developments or expansions of such customs, in forms and with applications that belong to a much more advanced state of the law. The baronial dignity of the bishops, the existence of the *Curia Regis* as a tribunal of regular resort, the right of the bishops to sit with the other barons in the *Curia* until "a question of blood" occurs, the use of juries of twelve men of the vicinity for criminal cases and for recognition of claims to land, all these are so stated as to show that the jurisprudence of which they were a part was known to the country at large. Accordingly, the institution of the Great Assize—the edict by which the king empowered the litigant who wished to avoid the trial by battle to

Tormented with the thought that in an hour of weakness, he had betrayed the interests of the Church committed to his charge, he dispatched a messenger to the pope to intreat his forgiveness. An indulgent answer, authorizing him to resume his sacred ministrations, and to confess to some skilful spiritual guide, somewhat reassured him. For some unexplained reason he paid a visit to Woodstock, but the king, hotly prejudiced against him, refused to see him, and he repaired to Canterbury. Here, brooding over his wrongs, and led to believe by the reports that reached him that his life was in danger, he came to the resolution to go to the pope, in defiance of the Constitutions of Clarendon, and without license from the king. For this purpose he rose

secure a recognition of his claim by inquest of jury—must be supposed to have been issued at an earlier period of Henry's reign; and the use of the "jury of accusation," which is named in the laws of Ethelred, but scarcely traceable afterwards, must have been revived before the year 1164. If such be the case, Professor Stubbs thinks that the Constitutions of Clarendon assume a character denied to them by the party statements of Becket's biographers. "They are no mere engine of tyranny, or secular spite against a Churchman; they are really a part of a great scheme of administrative reform, by which the debateable ground between the spiritual and temporal powers can be brought within the reach of common justice, and the lawlessness arising from professional jealousies abolished. That they were really this, and not an occasional weapon of controversy, may be further inferred from the rapidity with which they were drawn up, the completeness of their form, and the fact that, notwithstanding the storm that followed, they formed the groundwork of the later customary practice in all such matters."—"Constitutional History of England," i. 464-466.

at midnight, and with only two attendants, journeyed privately to his manor of Aldington, on the Kentish coast. On the seashore they found a small boat, and embarking in it, made sail for France. At dawn of day, however, they were driven back by contrary winds. A second attempt, equally secret, proved equally unsuccessful; but the archbishop's servants, discovering their master's absence, broke up the household in alarm, and many of them dispersed. One of the attendants, however, returned to Canterbury on the following day, and took up his quarters in an apartment in the palace. In the evening, after he had supped, and lamented for awhile the sufferings his master was compelled to undergo, he ordered the servant-in-waiting to bolt and bar the outer door, that they might go to bed. The servant accordingly went forth with a lighted torch, but hastily returned, in great terror, asserting that he had seen the archbishop crouching in a corner of the court. His statement was correct. The archbishop entered the palace and explained to the few domestics who had not deserted it, that God had seen fit to baffle his efforts to escape. Early next morning the royal officers appeared; they had received intelligence of the primate's flight, and had come to confiscate his possessions. At his presence, however, they retired in dismay.* Becket then betook himself again to Woodstock, where Henry admitted him to an audience, and received him courteously, though not cordially. Referring to his

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 218; Roger of Pontigny, p. 130.

attempted flight, he said:—"And so, my lord, you wish to leave my kingdom? Is it not large enough to hold us both?" And, on dismissing him, he desired him to govern his province without further thought of going abroad.

Becket proceeded to act upon the king's command, and threw his characteristic energy into the work of reform and administration. "With the prophet's mattock,"* says Herbert of Bosham, "he plucked up, pulled down, scattered, and rooted out whatsoever he found planted amiss in the Lord's garden. His hand rested not, his eye spared not; whatsoever was naughty, whatsoever rough, whatsoever crooked, he not only assailed with the prophet's mattock, but with the axe of the gospel he cut it down. Of the royal and ecclesiastical customs he observed such as were good; but those invented for the dishonour of the clergy he pruned away as bastard shoots, that they might not strike their roots deep."

An effort was made by the Bishop of Evreux to bring about a reconciliation between king and primate; but the difference between them was too wide to be easily bridged over. The negotiations, however, occupied the time until the meeting of a great Council at Northampton, in October, 1164, summoned by the king for the express purpose of accomplishing the archbishop's ruin. The Council was attended by bishops, abbots, earls, barons, high officers of State, and all of every kind who were of

* Isaiah vii. 25.

any authority or repute. It was a significant circumstance that the usual citation was not sent to the primate, but, as if he had been a criminal, he was commanded to attend by a precept issued through the sheriff of Kent.* Disregarding this deliberate insult, he repaired to Northampton; and on the morning after his arrival, attended the court, which was held in the royal castle. When the king appeared, he rose and bowed, standing ready, "with a cheerful countenance," to offer him the kiss of peace. But this salutation Henry avoided. At the archbishop's request, however, he ordered one William de Amery to be expelled from a house which had been allowed to the archbishop's retinue. The case of John the Marshal, was then brought forward. This nobleman had begun a suit in the archiepiscopal court for the recovery of certain land within the manor of Pagham, a manor belonging to the see of Canterbury; but finding the case likely to go against him, he availed himself of a provision of the Clarendon Constitutions, by which suitors could remove their suits into the king's court, on swearing that they had failed to obtain justice. A writ had thereupon been issued summoning the archbishop to answer John the Marshal's allegation; but on the day appointed, instead of appearing in person, he sent four knights with letters from himself and the sheriff of Kent, in which it was insisted that John had failed in his evidence, and that his oath on removing the suit, instead of being duly

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 220.

made on the gospels, or on relics of saints, had been sworn on a tripary * which he produced from under his cloak. The king, however, had rejected this excuse; and the archbishop was now called upon to answer, not only for the pretended refusal of justice, but for his non-appearance at Westminster, which was declared to be treason against the sovereign. As John the Marshal was detained in London by public business, the Council proceeded to consider the charge of treason (Thursday, October 8th). The archbishop's defence, that he had been unable, through illness, to travel, but had sent his representatives, was pronounced insufficient by judges who were already pledged to find him guilty. Yet they were reluctant to pass sentence upon an innocent man; and it was only at the king's express command that it was finally pronounced by Henry of Winchester. He was ordered to pay a fine of £500, in lieu of the forfeiture of his effects. Becket, at the earnest request of his brethren, offered no resistance; but to those around him he said, "Though I hold my tongue, all posterity will speak for me, and will denounce so unjust a sentence."

Henry was not yet satisfied with the humiliation he had inflicted on his former friend and counsellor, but proceeded to attack him on various personal charges. First, a demand was made for £300 which he had received as warden of the castles of Eye and Berkhamstead. He replied that it had been ex-

* A tripary (or triparium) was a book of versicles (or hymns) sung at mass, on certain intervals, prior to the introit.

pended, and much more, in the repair of those castles, and of the Tower of London ; and, he added, that no question of money should ever lie between him and his sovereign, and, as security for the repayment, gave the Earl of Gloucester, William of Eynesford, and another. On the third day of the Council, he was required to refund 500 marks which the king had lent him during the war of Toulouse—a war carried on for the king's benefit—and another sum of 500 marks which the chancellor at the same time had borrowed from a Jew on the king's security. Becket replied that the first sum was a gift, and not a loan ; and that both sums had been expended in the royal service ; but, as he could produce no evidence, he was adjudged to pay the money. Henry then asked for securities ; and on the archbishop announcing that he had property more than sufficient to meet the demand, sarcastically reminded him that all his movables had been confiscated on the preceding day, and required him, if he would escape arrest, to find security. This, accordingly, was done ; but so evident was it that the king had determined to crush the archbishop, that the knights and nobles ceased to pay their usual visits of respect.*

The last and most exorbitant demand was for an account of the revenues of vacant sees and abbeys which had fallen into his hands during his chancellorship, representing a sum variously estimated at from 30,000 to 40,000 marks. No demand could be more scandalously unjust ; for, first, on Becket's

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 222.

consecration as primate, he had been publicly released, as was customary, from all pecuniary obligations to the State; and, second, it was well known that in the public service he had incurred a vast expenditure. Pleading that he had received no notice of so serious a charge, Becket asked for a little delay, but could obtain only until the morrow. On the morning of the fourth day, he consulted with his brother prelates; and the result was, that Henry of Winchester offered the king a sum of 1000 marks to stay proceedings. This was refused; and by the royal order the bishops were shut up to continue their deliberations. As might have been expected, Foliot advised that the primate should resign his see; and similar advice was given by the Bishops of Chichester, Lincoln, and Exeter; while Henry of Winchester and others supported Becket in a bolder policy. "If," exclaimed Bishop Henry, "an archbishop, the primate of all England, give bishops an example of yielding up their authority, and the care of the souls committed to them, at the nod and threat of a prince, what is to be expected but that the whole state of the Church should be confounded by arbitrary will, and that as are the people so should be the priest?" The discussion was abruptly closed by Becket, who desired leave to speak with the Earls of Cornwall and Leicester; and, on their entrance, addressing them, said, "Having discussed the whole matter for which the lord our king has convened us, we wish to consult certain persons better informed than ourselves in its details, but who are

not now present. It is therefore our humble request that this meeting may be adjourned until to-morrow, when, if it please God, we will give our answer." The Bishops of London and Rochester were deputed to accompany the earls to the court; but, it is said, that the former, as spokesman, so worded the message as to imply that Becket sought the delay in order to make the preparations necessary for obeying the royal command. On this understanding the king granted the adjournment; but the archbishop immediately repudiated it; the Council broke up in confusion; and the archbishop returned to the hall of his monastery almost unattended, a disgraced, and, apparently, a doomed man.

The next day being Sunday, Becket did not leave his lodgings; and on Monday the agitation of his mind brought on an attack of illness, so that he was confined to bed. Tuesday, the 13th, was a memorable day. Early in the morning some of the bishops waited upon him, and once more urged him to avert further danger to the Church and himself by unreserved submission to the royal enemy. He replied, in words full of courage and determination, which have been spiritedly rendered by Mr. Aubrey de Vere:—

" Bishops of England !

For many truths by you this day enforced,
Hear ye in turn but one. The Church is God's :
Lords, were it ours, then might we traffic with it ;
At will make large its functions, or contract ;
Save it or sell ; worship or crucify ;
I say the Church is God's ; for He beheld it ;

His thought, ere time began ; counted its bones,
Which in His book were writ. I say that He
From His own side, in water and in blood
Gave birth to it on Calvary, and caught it,
Despite the nails, His bride in His own arms :
I say that He, a Spirit of clear heat,
Lives in its frame, and cleanses with pure pain
His sacrificial precinct, but consumes
The chaff with other ardours. Lords, I know you ;
What done ye have, and what intend ere yet
The sun that rises weeping sets this night ;
And therefore bind I with this charge your souls :
If any secular court shall pass its verdict
On me, your Lord, or e'er that sin be sinned,
I bid you flee that Court ; if secular arm
Attempt me, lay thereon the Church's ban,
Or else against you I appeal to Rome.
To-day the heathen rage ; I fear them not.
If fall I must, this hand, ere yet I fall,
Stretched from the bosom of a peaceful gown
Above a troubled king and darkening realm,
Shall send God's sentence forth." *

Against Becket's exercise of authority in laying his commands upon them, Foliot intimated his intention of appealing to the pope. Then all withdrew, except Winchester and Salisbury, who openly sympathized with the primate. As for him, filled with a spirit of lofty enthusiasm, he proceeded to the Conventual Church, where, arrayed in the *pallium* (pall), which was usually kept for high festivals, he celebrated mass at the altar of S. Stephen, as if to intimate that he, like the Christian protomartyr, was prepared to suffer death for Christ's Church. The bystanders understood all that was implied by

* "S. Thomas of Canterbury," pp. 64, 65.

this significant action ; and as Becket's voice, clear, loud, and unshaken, chanted the introit for S. Stephen's Day, *Etenim sederunt principes* ("Princes also did sit and speak against me"), tears filled every eye, and the sound of lamentation rose upon the air.

He left the altar with a face like that of which Ezekiel speaks, the face both of a man and of a lion—resolute, stern, composed ; and, at the advice of his friends, assuming his ordinary dress, that of a canon regular, he rode along the streets of Northampton, preceded by his cross-bearer, and surrounded by excited crowds, weeping and imploring his blessing. The scene was one which might rather have been looked for in a southern clime than in the cold atmosphere of the north. On arriving in the castle-yard, Becket dismounted, took his cross from the hands of its bearer, and entered the hall on his way to the royal chamber. The gates closed behind him, so that he was virtually a prisoner. While he carried his cross, however, he enjoyed the privilege of sanctuary, and he refused to part with it, either to Robert of Hereford or Gilbert of London, the latter of whom vainly endeavoured to wrest it from his hands. "Brother," said Henry of Winchester, "let the archbishop keep his cross ; for it is right that he should carry it." "Such conduct," replied Foliot, "can only break the peace ; for the king will come himself with the sword, and then we shall have king and primate well matched against one another." "Be it so," replied Becket, "my cross is

the sign of peace, and I will not part with it; but the king's sword is an instrument of war." *

Meanwhile, the king had withdrawn into an inner chamber, where he remained throughout the day. The bishops and nobles were summoned to his presence, and Becket was left in the hall with Herbert and Fitz-Stephen, his faithful clerks, whose fears were constantly excited by the din of angry voices that issued from the royal apartment. To the bishops Henry complained loudly of the injury the archbishop had done him by coming to his court as if it were that of a traitor and persecutor rather than of a Christian king. The bishops made haste to excuse themselves; but when the king would have persuaded them to join with the nobles in judging the primate, they pleaded that they were debarred by the prohibitions which he had laid upon them. At this Henry's rage flamed up so violently that even Becket's enemies were alarmed at what might ensue. Roger of York quitted the council chamber, and on reaching the hall, remarked to two of his chaplains, "Let us withdraw; for it is not fit that we should look on what is to be done here to him of Canterbury." One of the chaplains replied, however, that he would "wait to see what might be God's will; that there could be no better end than for the primate to give his blood for the right." Roger turned to Becket himself, and besought him to yield to the royal demands. "Hence, Sathanas!" was Becket's only reply.†

* Herbert of Bosham, 143; Garnier, 39; Roger of Pontigny, 37.

† Garnier, p. 44.

Another conference was held in the king's chamber ; and it was at last agreed that the bishops should be excused from joining in the judgment, provided that they appealed to the pope against Becket on the ground that he had perjured himself. They returned to the hall accordingly ; and Hilary of Chichester, acting as spokesman, informed the archbishop that, as he and they had sworn to observe the Constitutions, and he had then violated his oath, they regarded him as perjured, renounced their obedience, and appealed against him. "I hear what you say," he replied, "and will meet you on the day of appeal, but all that was done at Clarendon was done 'saving the honour of the Church.'" While he was justifying his conduct, the barons entered, with the Earl of Leicester at their head. Mindful of their former friendship, the earl slowly and reluctantly began to pronounce sentence. The archbishop interrupted him, "Son Earl, do you first hear me." And he repeated his objections to the illegal proceedings of which he was the victim. "As the soul," he said, "is more worthy than the body, so are you bound to obey God rather than earthly king. Shall the son judge or condemn his father? Therefore do I decline to receive judgment either from the king or from yourself; the pope alone, under God, is my judge. I place my Church and myself under His protection. I summon the bishops who have obeyed the king rather than God to answer before His tribunal; and so, protected by the Holy Catholic Church and the power of the Apostolic see, I quit this court!"

With cross uplifted, Becket slowly left the chamber, while a storm of insults raged around him. In the courtyard he mounted his horse, and, followed by the tears and prayers of the people, hastened to the monastery. He spent the night behind the high altar of S. Andrew's Chapel, where he was in sanctuary; and before day broke, rode away towards the coast, reaching Lincoln early in the morning. A small boat carried him and his attendant forty miles down the river, to a hermitage belonging to the monks of Sempringham. After resting there three days to baffle his pursuers, he continued his journey, always by night, to Eastry, on the Kentish coast, about eight miles from Canterbury. Thence the fugitive crossed to Gravelines, in Flanders (November 2nd). Assuming the disguise of a Cistercian monk, and the name of Brother Christian, he contrived to elude his enemies, and reach S. Omer, where, from the prior and monks of the great abbey of S. Bertin, he received a reverential welcome. A brief rest having recruited his energies, he set out, with an escort of three hundred knights, to visit the pope at Sens.*

On entering the pope's presence, Becket was bidden to the seat of honour at his right hand, and permitted to remain seated while he entered upon an explanation of the contention between Henry and himself. His narrative produced a strong impression, which was deepened by his production of a copy of

* Herbert of Bosham.

the Constitutions of Clarendon. Departing from his previous attitude of neutrality, Alexander III. warmly condemned them, and even censured Becket for his ambiguous promise to observe them. He was further committed by an ingenious stroke of policy on the part of the archbishop, who professing his profound regret at the manner in which he had been instituted into the primacy, and acknowledging that his election was uncanonical, resigned into the pope's hands "the burthen he was no longer able to bear," and plucking from his finger the archiepiscopal ring, handed it to Alexander. It was impossible for the latter to fill the vacancy thus suddenly created with any nominee of his own, and he was indisposed to allow it to lapse into Henry's hands. On the following day he therefore reinstated Becket, who was thenceforward able to say that he held his see of the pope, and not of the Crown. At the same time Alexander assured him of his constant sympathy and support; and commended him to the charge of the Abbot of Pontigny, a Cistercian monastery, about twelve leagues from Sens.

He arrived at this secure retreat on S. Andrew's Day, 1164, and for nearly two years it became the centre from which he shook the ecclesiastical world. We are inclined to believe that his residence in its cloistered shades had a beneficial effect on his character, softening its harsher qualities and subduing that love of splendid pomp and display which had been one of his chief weaknesses. Anxious in all things to divest himself of the worldliness which

had been his reproach, and to work out that higher ideal which of late years had risen before his mind, he gave himself up to prayer and fasting. Frequently he required his chaplain, Robert of Merton, to apply the discipline of the lash; and when, spent with fatigue, the chaplain held his hand, he would afterwards look down from his work to see the primate, in dress of sackcloth, covered with vermin, prostrate on the floor. We may smile at the means which Becket adopted to rebuke his rebellious nature, and the thought may come to us that there was too much ostentation in his piety; yet we cannot doubt the sincerity of his motives. It would seem, too, that physical suffering was absolutely necessary to repress the strong appetites which beset him. Occasionally the flesh proved too strong for the spirit; and his old love of delicate and choice living revived within him. But for these relapses he always punished himself by a more rigorous aceticism and sterner penance.

Meanwhile, the quarrel between the king and the archbishop proceeded. The former waged war against Becket's friends and dependents, banishing many of them from England, and those who were wealthy punishing with heavy fines. Becket retorted with the most powerful weapon he had at his command. In the spring of 1166 he went on a pilgrimage to the celebrated altars of the Blessed Virgin, S. Gregory and S. Orancius;* and after-

* S. Gregory was the founder of the English Church. As for S. Orancius, it was supposed that his relics imparted an assurance of victory to all who watched a night before his shrine.

wards repairing to Vezelay, there, on Ascension Day, in its great and glorious cathedral, he fulminated the sentence of excommunication against John of Oxford, "for having usurped to himself the deanery of the Church of Salisbury against the commands of his lordship the pope," and for his intercourse with schismatics; against Richard of Ilchester, Archdeacon of Poitiers; against Richard de Lacy, the great justiciary, Ranulf de Broc, Jocelyn of Baliol, "together with all who for the future should put their hands against the goods and property of the Church of Canterbury, or injure or interfere with those for whose necessities they have been set apart." The Bishop of Salisbury he suspended, for having uncanonically instituted John of Oxford into his deanery. He anathematized six of the Constitutions of Clarendon in particular, with all who should act on them; and absolved the bishops from the oath they had taken to observe them. He had intended to launch his excommunication at the king himself; but hearing that he was seriously ill, he was satisfied with summoning him to repent, and with threatening an excommunication if he persisted in evil doing. Then he addressed letters explaining his proceedings to the clergy and laity of his province, and requiring obedience from his suffragans. Their answer was an appeal to the pope, and a shower of missives, which served only to embitter the contention. As for Henry, he retaliated by threatening to confiscate all the property of the Cistercians within his dominions,

if the Abbot of Pontigny continued to harbour his contumacious prelate. Becket relieved his host from his difficulty by withdrawing to Sens, where he was joyfully received by the archbishop,* one of his warmest and steadiest partisans; and lodged in the pleasant abbey of S. Columba, at some short distance from the city.

The solution of the great difficulty seemed now to rest with the pope, to whom both Henry and Becket had appealed. His sympathies we can hardly doubt to have been with the latter, for he was a staunch upholder of the hierarchical principle; but political considerations prevented him from giving them free course. He was under considerable obligations to King Henry, who had supported him against Pope Victor IV., and he had no desire to force him to embrace the pretensions of Victor's successor in the anti-popeship, Paschal. He endeavoured to relieve himself from his embarrassments by the unfortunate expedient of a temporizing policy; and appointed a legatine commission, consisting of Cardinals Otho and William of Pavia, to inquire into the points at issue between the king and the archbishop. As William of Pavia was notoriously in the royal interest, Becket denounced the commission as unfairly constituted, and his strong representation to the pope secured a modification of its powers. As a concession to the king, however, so long as the commission was in force,

* Archbishop Hugh was succeeded in 1168 by Archbishop William, who was also Becket's true and constant supporter.

the archbishop's power of excommunicating, and the sentences already pronounced by him, were suspended.*

The legates arrived in France in the autumn of 1167, and visited Becket at Sens, and afterwards King Henry at Rouen. Conferences were held, and laborious negotiations carried on, in which the efforts, bribes, and promises of King Henry and his emissaries were neutralised by the influence of King Lewis, who had zealously espoused the archbishop's cause. Vacillating between the two parties, the unfortunate pope could not summon courage to pronounce any definite decision; but wrote letters upon letters in the vain hope of meeting a great crisis by soft words.† And when these failed, and he saw that his legatine commission had effected nothing, he appointed three new mediators, Simon, Prior of Mont Dieu; Engelbert, Prior of Val St. Pierre; and Bernard de la Coudre (or de Corilo), a monk of the order of Grammont; and he entrusted them with letters to Henry, in which "exhortations to peace" and "threats of punishment" were ingeniously alternated. They began their task under favourable auspices, for both parties were growing weary of the struggle, Becket alone excepted, and the French king was prepared to exert all his influence on the side of peace. Henry

* Becket, meanwhile, had excommunicated the Bishop of London, his own archdeacon, and numerous clerks and laymen, for various offences.

† Robertson: "Becket: a Biography," pp. 202, 203.

suggested that the archbishop should be translated to some other see ; but this was an arrangement to which he naturally refused his consent. He agreed, however, to attend a meeting which had been arranged between the Kings of France and England, and was to be held on the Epiphany, 1169, at Montmirail, near Chartres. The papal commissioners were also present. The conference lasted for some hours. Becket began in a tone of much humility, ascribing the differences which had arisen between Henry and himself to "his insufficiency," and submitting to the king's mercy, "saving the honour of God." This reservation, which Becket substituted for the obnoxious phrase of "*salvo ordine nostro*," gave great offence to Henry. "See," he exclaimed to King Lewis, "how foolishly and vainly this man deserted his Church, though neither I nor any other person drove him out of the kingdom, but he fled away of his own accord and by night! Yet now he would persuade you that his cause is that of the Church, and that he is suffering for the truth's sake. I have always been willing, and am still willing, that he should still rule his Church with as much liberty as was enjoyed by any of the saints his predecessors. But, observe you," he continued, * "whatever his lordship of Canterbury disapproves, he will say is contrary to God's honour, and so he will on all occasions get the advantage of me ; but that I may not be thought to despise God's honour, I will put before him this proposition. Many kings of England

* Herbert of Bosham, 262-270 ; John of Salisbury, 168, 169.

have there been before me, some of greater and some of less power than myself. Many good and holy archbishops of Canterbury have there also been before him. Now let him behave towards me as the holiest of his predecessors behaved towards the least of mine, and I am satisfied." All present were of opinion that the king in making this proposal had humbled himself sufficiently. Turning towards Becket, Lewis inquired, with a touch of sarcasm, "My Lord Archbishop, do you wish to be more than a saint?" The papal commissioners, the French prelates, and many of Becket's partisans urged him to submit. But he remained inflexible. No such promise, he said, had been exacted from any of his predecessors, except the blessed Anselm, who had twice gone into banishment rather than yield to it. It was true that there had been archbishops before him greater and holier than himself, each one of whom had rooted out some of the abuses of the Church; but had they corrected all, he would not then be exposed to a fierce and fiery trial.

Night brought the conference to a close; and the two kings rode away without saluting the archbishop, who retired to his lodgings slowly, attended by his clerks and chaplains. As many of these had been four years in exile, they did not sympathize with their master in his pertinacity. One of them, Henry of Houghton, was riding in front of Becket, when his horse stumbled. "Come up," he exclaimed, "saving the honour of God and of holy Church, and my order!"* The archbishop, however,

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 262.

took no notice of the sarcasm. "Brother," said his friend, the Bishop of Poitiers, "take heed lest the Church be destroyed by thee." "By me," he replied, "with God's blessing, it shall never be destroyed!"

Soon afterwards he retired to Sens, to abide in patience the course of events, which soon turned again in his favour. The temporary agreement between Henry and Lewis was broken up; and Lewis inclined once more towards the primate, visiting him at Sens, and honouring him with special marks of his favour. The pope also wavered towards his side, and withdrew the inhibition which had prevented him from employing his spiritual weapons. Of this new power he hastened to make effective use. At Clairvaux, on Palm Sunday, 1169, he publicly excommunicated the Bishops of London and Salisbury, in spite of an appeal to the pope which they had taken the precaution to lodge, and numerous high personages, belonging to the king's party. The excommunicated showed the utmost vigilance to prevent the formal letters of excommunication from reaching England; but Becket found a young Frenchman, named Berengar, who undertook to convey them. And on Ascension Day, while Foliot was celebrating high mass in S. Paul's Cathedral, and had reached the offertory, this messenger succeeded in delivering the dreaded document, in proclaiming its contents to the people, and, with the aid of the archbishop's partisans, in effecting his escape. Repairing to York, he pub-

lished the excommunication in a similarly ingenious manner.

Foliot was compelled to obey his metropolitan's sentence; but, armed with letters from the king and friendly ecclesiastics, he set out for Rome to appeal against it. The pope, meanwhile, appointed a third commission, consisting of Gratian, a sub-deacon, and Vivian, archdeacon of Orvieto, who arrived in France in the early days of August, and proceeded to confer with the two kings. The negotiations were protracted over several weeks; but both Henry and Becket clung firmly to the positions they had originally taken up. The former would sign no agreement which did not contain the reservation, "Saving the dignity of my Crown"; the latter insisted on the clause, "Saving the liberty of the Church." Both knew that the question between them was not a personal one; but a question involving many and serious issues, and primarily, the relations hereafter to exist between the Church and the State.

Gratian, offended by the king's violent outbursts of temper, returned to Rome; but Vivian continued instant in his efforts at mediation, and finally succeeded in persuading Becket to attend a conference at Montmartre, near Paris, on the 18th of November.* Both Henry and Becket on this occasion seemed desirous of composing the personal quarrel. There was a studious avoidance (to use Canon Robertson's phrase) of offensive topics on

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 263.

either side. The king's conciliatory disposition appeared in an offer to submit the questions between himself and the archbishop to King Lewis for decision, to the French nobles or bishops, or to the learned men of the University of Paris. The archbishop, with unwonted meekness, replied, that he did not decline such judgment, but preferred an amicable settlement to engaging in litigation. The king expressed his willingness to give up all lands belonging to the Church, and though he demurred to a demand that he should compensate Becket and the exiles generally for the revenues they had lost, eventually, at the French king's instigation, he consented. Nothing could be more satisfactory. The archbishop said nothing about reservations; and the king was silent as to constitutions. Everything seemed to be arranged, when Becket claimed, as a guarantee of the royal sincerity, that the king should give him "the kiss of peace" (*osculum pacis*). The fair prospect was immediately clouded over; for at Henry's excuse, that he would have gladly granted the *osculum*, but for an oath that he would never kiss the archbishop, Becket not unnaturally took alarm. He felt that he had nearly fallen into a snare, and hesitated to make any further promise. The conference was interrupted, and Henry rode away to his lodgings at Nantes, cursing and swearing with true Plantagenet violence, while Becket retired to lodge in the Temple at Paris.

War again broke out between the rival powers. Becket hurled abroad his ecclesiastical censures;

Henry issued the severest and sternest edicts. All who should observe any interdict issued by Becket were threatened with banishment, and persons of every age were required to take an oath abjuring Becket and the pope. All appeals to the pope or to the archbishop, and all obedience to their mandates, were strictly forbidden.* As a proclamation of irreconcilable hostility, Henry ordered the archbishop of York to perform the ceremony of crowning his eldest son, though this had always been the undisputed privilege of the see of Canterbury. (June 18, 1170). The breach had never been wider; the possibility of healing it had never seemed more remote; and yet this was the very time chosen by Henry II., for effecting a compromise, if not a reconciliation. The pope had appointed a fourth commission, consisting of the archbishop of Rouen, and the Bishop of Nevers, assisted by the Archbishop of Sens; but their efforts would probably have failed, had not Henry found that the country would be subjected to an interdict, and had he not arrived at the conclusion that Becket at home would be less dangerous than Becket abroad. The two latter causes, we suspect, were those which brought about his change of front.† Discovering his anxiety to make peace, the commissioners arranged a meeting between him and Becket at Fretteville, on the 22nd of June.

“We were summoned,” says Herbert of Bosham, “to attend at a meeting which was to take place

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 267.

† *Ibid.* 269-272.

between the kings, and we went there accordingly. On the third day of the conference the business of the two kings was ended, and they immediately began to consider how we and King Henry might be reconciled. Lewis departed, not wishing to interfere, but he committed us to the protection of certain of his nobles, who were ordered to mediate in our favour. But why need I multiply words? Peace was there concluded between us; and the kiss, which on the previous occasion, had proved an obstacle, was now neither demanded by the archbishop, nor offered by the king. No reference was made to it. The king simply promised us peace and security in the hearing of all the prelates and princes who were present. As regards the royal customs, and the property, with movables and fixtures, of which we had been deprived, the same form of agreement was observed as at the previous conference." . . .

The king and the archbishop, after saluting, turned their horses aside, and rode towards a level place, conversing privately with one another. Among other matters, the archbishop asked permission without offence to inflict ecclesiastical punishment on the Archbishop of York, and his own suffragans, for the injury they had done to the prerogative of the see of Canterbury by crowning the young Prince Henry. To this the king assented, and Becket, grateful for the concession, immediately, in the sight of the assembled crowd, sprang from his horse, and threw himself humbly at King Henry's

feet. But when he prepared to remount, the king courteously held his stirrup, while all the spectators looked on and marvelled, not knowing the cause, until the archbishop related it privately to his friends on their return.* The kiss of peace, however, was not exchanged, though the pope had absolved the king from the oath which he had previously put forward as an obstacle. He expressed his willingness to kiss the archbishop a hundred times, on mouth, hands, and feet; but desired that, for the sake of his honour, he might be excused until within his own dominions, where the act would bear more of a voluntary appearance.

Peace being thus concluded, Becket prepared to return to England, paving the way (as it were) by letters of suspension and excommunication directed against the bishops who had assisted in the coronation of Prince Henry. Before he left the French shore he and the king met twice. On the first occasion, at Tours, which was then within the English dominion, he sought the *osculum pacis* from his sovereign during the celebration of mass, but the demand was evaded by Henry with the remark, "Another time you shall have enough of it." The second interview took place at Chaumont, near Blois, and was much more cordial. "Why is it," said the king, pathetically, "that you will not do as I wish? I would place everything in your hands." Relating the story to Herbert of Bosham, Becket

* From another source we learn that Henry promised that the young prince should be crowned anew by Becket.

said:—"I remembered the words, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'" Henry promised to see him again shortly, either at Rouen or in England. "My lord," said Becket, "my mind misgives me that you will never see me again in this life." "What!" exclaimed Henry; "do you take me for a traitor?" "Far be it from you, my lord," replied Becket; and with these words they finally parted.

Becket had dispatched his servants to England to make ready his palaces and manor-houses, and had purchased a large supply of French wines that he might renew his hospitable entertainments. But he was not unconscious of the peril to which he was about to expose himself. He knew that he had no powerful friends in England; that he was regarded with hatred, jealousy, or fear by the bishops and nobles, many of the clergy, the high officers of State, who waxed rich on the sequestered revenues of his see, and the fierce knights, who had taken possession of lands belonging to or claimed by the church of Canterbury. Ranulf de Broc loudly protested that he would never surrender his Castle of Saltwood; and swore a great oath that he would take Becket's life before he had eaten a whole loaf of bread in England. To prevent the arrival of the letters of excommunication and suspension which the king had sanctioned, and the pope confirmed, armed men kept watch and ward all along the coast. The most important, however, the letter suspending the Archbishop of York, was secretly carried across by a

man named Idonea; * and the others passed safely through various channels. Both the French king and the Bishop of Paris endeavoured to dissuade Becket from plunging into the dangers that awaited him, when he had not won the security of the *osculum pacis*; but his high courage was not to be quelled, and, in truth, his soul thirsted for the glory of martyrdom. To his friends he said:—

“Seven years of exile are enough :
If into that fair church I served of old
I may not entrance make, a living man,
Let them who loved me o’er its threshold lift,
And lay my body dead.” †

“His resolution to return to Canterbury,” says Canon Robertson, ‡ “was not to be shaken by any fear or danger. He declared that for more than six years he had been an exile, and that, although he believed his death to be at hand, even if he were to be torn limb from limb, nothing should any longer keep him from his post. It was in no spirit of peace or conciliation that he prepared to return; the step which he had taken in making use of the papal letters, which were intended to be published only in extremity, and were certain to re-open and envenom the wounds which had been superficially healed, was increased by all those in whom personal devotion to him had wholly overpowered their prudence and their discernment.” Surely in these

* According to Roger of Pontigny, the messenger employed was a servant, named Roger.

† Aubrey de Vere, “S. Thomas of Canterbury,” Act v. Scene 2.

‡ Canon Robertson, “Becket: a Biography,” p. 252.

comments the canon has not shown his usual fairness. It is at least as reasonable to suppose that Becket may have hoped by publishing the papal letters to weaken the hands of his enemies. He could have had no reason for dealing with them gently. Something, nay, a good deal, may be said in defence of the king's line of action ; but for the conduct of Foliot and Roger of York, no excuse can be offered. They had pursued their primate with a ceaseless hostility ; and it was essential to the preservation of ecclesiastical discipline that their contumacy and violence should be punished.

Accompanied by John of Oxford, whom Henry had commissioned to see Becket reinstated in his see, and by a goodly train of clerks and gentlemen, he embarked at Witsand, and, in a vessel with the archiepiscopal banner of the cross at its mast-head, crossed the Channel to Sandwich, where he landed on the 1st of September ; crowds pressing forward to welcome him, filling the air with the shout of "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord !" and some even rushing knee-deep into the waves to be the first to receive his blessing. A body of armed men, under Gervase de Cornhill, Reginald de Warrenne, and Ranulf de Broc, showed a desire to molest him and his followers, but were restrained by the presence of John of Oxford, and the demonstrations of the excited multitude. On the following day Becket proceeded to Canterbury, through roads thronged by enthusiastic spectators,

from every village the people issuing forth to meet him, headed by their priests, and in their front the cross; and the bells of every parish church ringing out a joyous peal. Attended by a long procession of monks and priests, he entered his cathedral, which had put on its festal garb to do him honour.* Prostrate before the high altar he prayed awhile in silence. Then, rising, he seated himself on his throne, and receiving his clergy one by one, bestowed on each the kiss of peace. Afterwards he preached a sermon from the prophetic text, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." The day, perhaps the brightest and happiest in Becket's chequered life, concluded with a banquet and general rejoicings, the streets echoing with the blare of trumpets and the sound of exultant voices.

Next morning the sheriff of Kent, with Ranulf de Broc, and others of the king's officers, made their appearance, and demanded that he should absolve the excommunicated and suspended bishops. After a stormy interview they departed, with the understanding that the absolution would be given if the bishops pledged themselves to stand a public trial. It is said that the bishops of London and Salisbury were disposed to submit, but were overruled by Roger of York, who trusted in the wonder-working power of his immense wealth; and the three prelates repaired to King Henry's court in Normandy.

After spending a week at Canterbury, Becket proceeded to London, with the intention of visiting

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 282.

the young king, his former pupil ; but his enemies took care that he should not be admitted to the royal presence, and procured an order for him to return immediately to his own diocese (December 14th). On his way thither, he tarried for a few days at his manor-house in the village of Harrow, where he had a pathetic interview with Abbot Simon of S. Alban's, and through him made an unsuccessful attempt to propitiate the young king. The abbot was urgent that he should spend the Christmas festival and S. Stephen's day at S. Alban's, the abbey of the British proto-martyr. "Willingly would I come," said Becket, weeping (like all enthusiastic natures, he was easily moved to tears), "but it has been otherwise ordered. Return in peace, dear brother, return in peace to your house, which may God preserve!—unless you will come with me and be my guest, and my comforter in my many sorrows." *

Returning to his cathedral-city for the last time, he devoted himself with his usual energy to the duties of his high office, and showed even more than his usual earnestness in his prayers, even more than his usual liberality in almsgiving. He was not without his trials ; and trials well calculated to disturb his warm, impetuous nature. The Brocs and other enemies who lived in the neighbourhood were incessant in their petty malice. "They attacked and beat his people on the highways ; they even laid wait for himself ; they hunted in his chase,

* Matthew Paris, p. 124.

killed his deer, and carried away his dogs; they interrupted supplies of food which were on their way for the use of his household; Ranulf de Broc's brother Robert, who had formerly been a clerk, and afterwards a Cistercian monk, but had thrown off the monastic profession, instigated his nephew John to cut off the tail of one of the archiepiscopal sumpter-horses."

Christmas Day came, and after celebrating the usual nocturnal mass, Beckett entered the cathedral for the services of that high festival. His sermon was from the text "In terra pax, hominibus bonæ voluntatis" (Luke ii. 14), and contained a reference to the holy fathers of the church of Canterbury, whose bones made doubly sacred the hallowed ground. "One martyr," he said, "they had already (Alfegé murdered by the Danes at Greenwich in 1012). It was possible they would soon have another." With tears and sobs he spoke of himself as destined shortly to quit this world, until his hearers, who crowded the nave, were moved by his pathetic language to a deep frenzy of excitement. "Father," they cried, "why do you abandon us so soon? To whose care will you leave us?" His strain of melancholy gave way to a burst of indignation, when the man triumphed over the priest, and he remembered all the indignities he had suffered. "You would have thought," says his biographer, "that you were looking at the Apocalyptic beast, which had at once the face of a man and the face of a lion." He hurled his denunciations at the bishops who had been engaged in the coronation

* Herbert of Bosham, 322.

of the younger Henry, he excommunicated Ranulf and Robert de Broc for the outrages of which they had been guilty, and the vicars of Thistlewood and Harrow for having intruded into those benefices without his authority. As he descended from the pulpit to celebrate mass at the high altar, he repeated to his cross-bearer, Alexander Llewellyn, the prophetic words, "One martyr, S. Alfege, you have already ; another, if God will, shall you soon have."*

On Sunday (S. John's Day) he despatched Herbert of Bosham and his cross-bearer with letters for the king of France and the Archbishop of Sens ; others were sent off to the pope and the Bishop of Norwich. The same night he received a private warning from France to be on his guard against an attack. Meanwhile, the excommunicated prelates had joined King Henry at the Castle of Bue, near Bayeux. At the conference which followed, the king seems to have concealed the fact that he had sanctioned their excommunication.† They, on their part, told their tale with considerable exaggerations, and contrived to represent the archbishop as directing a seditious movement against the younger king. Henry was stirred up into one of his Angevin excesses of fury, and turned on the prelates with the fierce questions, "What, then? What would you have me do?"

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 292.

† Canon Robertson treats the king's silence as of no importance, and appears to regard his assent to the excommunication as purely formal. We know not why. He must have known that Becket was certain to use the weapons which were put into his hands.

"It is not our duty to advise you," replied Roger of York; "ask counsel from your barons and knights." One of these—it is supposed to have been Archbishop Roger—added, "But so long as Thomas lives, you will have neither good days, nor peaceful realm, nor quiet life." These words drew from the incensed king the passionate exclamation, "What! Shall a fellow whom I have loaded with benefits lift up his hand against me? Shall he insult the king and all his family, and trample on my kingdom? Shall a beggar who came to court on a lame sumpter-mule, sit at his pleasure on the throne itself? A curse upon the sluggish wretches whom I have brought up in my court, and who care nothing for their allegiance to their master! Will no one deliver me from the insults of this low-born and turbulent priest?"*

These fatal words fell upon the ears of four men quick to act upon the terrible menace they conveyed. Reginald Fitzurse ("son of the bear," and, according to the Canterbury monks, of truly bear-like character); Hugh de Moreville (that is "of the city of death," who was said to have boiled a young Englishman alive, on the false accusation of his wife); William de Tracy (a brave soldier, but, it was reported, of "parricidal wickedness"); and Richard le Brez, or le Bret (commonly known by the Latinized form of Brito, but more fit to have been named "the Brute"), were four high officers of the royal household ("cubicularii") who rejoiced at an

* Fitz-Stephen, pp. 290-292; Edward Grim, p. 68.

opportunity of doing their master a service. Hurrying to the coast, and embarking at different ports, they crossed the Channel next day,* and repaired to Ranulf de Broc's castle of Saltwood, where they spent the night in arranging the details of their murderous project. On the morning of the 29th they rode to Canterbury. The 29th of December fell on a Tuesday; and Tuesday, as Dean Stanley points out,† had always been a memorable day in Becket's life. On a Tuesday he was born and baptized; on a Tuesday he had fled from Northampton; on a Tuesday had quitted the king's court in Normandy; on a Tuesday had departed from England for his six years' exile; on a Tuesday had been warned of his martyrdom in a vision at Pontigny; on a Tuesday had returned from banishment; and now, on a Tuesday, the hour of doom came upon him.

His biographers record that on the morning of the fatal day, Becket's mind was disturbed by a presentiment of peril. Almost before dawn he woke the clergy who slept in his bedchamber to inquire whether it was possible to reach Sandwich before daylight, and, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, bade those escape who would. In the course of the morning he attended mass in the cathedral; and, afterwards, having confessed to two of his monks,

* On learning their departure the king sent messengers to overtake them, and to arrest the archbishop. They did not arrive in time to prevent the murder.

† Dean Stanley, "Historical Memorials," p. 52.

he received his daily penance of three scourgings.* At three o'clock in the afternoon, he dined in the palace-hall, and drinking somewhat more freely than usual, was reminded of it by his cup-bearer.

The dinner ended, Becket retired to his private chamber; and the table he had left was occupied,

* Mr. Aubrey de Vere, in his drama of "S. Thomas of Canterbury," puts into the mouth of a monk the following narrative (founded on the chronicles of Becket's doings on that eventful Tuesday), Act v. Scene 12 :—

"Within his chamber we had sung our nocturns :
The office finished, for one hour or more
He stood beside the casement, open flung,
Despite the flying flakes. I heard him murmur,
'In years remote they deck the martyr's shrine—
Not many weep above a churchman's grave.
Is that a loss? Ah me!' Again I heard him :
'Herbert, my tenderest friend, and John, my wisest,
Both, both for me have lost their earthly all :
These must bide on, bereft.' More late he asked
If Sandwich might be reached ere break of day.
We answered, 'Yes,—two hours ere dawn.' Once more
He stood full-gazing through the winter night;
Then spake aloud, 'Whate'er God hath in store,
Thomas will wait it patient in his church :
He leaves that church no more.' . . .

At yonder altar of S. Benedict
He said his mass. Next, in the chapter-house,
Conversed with two old monks of things divine ;
Then for his confessor he sent, and made
Confession with his humble wont ; which ended,
He sat with us an hour, and held discourse
Full gladly. I never marked till then
How joyous was his eye. An old monk cried,
'Thank God, my Lord, you make good cheer.' He answered,
'Who goeth to his Master should be glad.'"

according to custom, by the servants. It was now that the four knights arrived, and, leaving their weapons outside, strode into the hall. The servants, recognizing them as belonging to the royal household, offered them refreshment, which, says Edward Grim, "they, thirsting rather for blood, refused." Making their way to the foot of the staircase leading to the archbishop's apartment, they were met by his seneschal, William Fitznigel, who, at their request, introduced them into his master's presence. "My lord," he said, "here are four barons from King Henry desiring audience of you." At the moment of their entrance he was conversing with his favourite attendants, John of Salisbury, William Fitz-Stephen, and Edward Grim; nor was he aware of their presence until, on turning round, he found them sitting on the floor, close to his feet, with an archer, who had followed them, seated behind them. For some moments the murderers and their victim gazed at each other. At length the archbishop greeted Tracy by name; and Fitzurse, after another brief silence, replied, in a scornful tone, "God help thee!" Another pause ensued, and Fitzurse spoke again:—"We bring you a message from the king; shall it be told in private, or in the hearing of all?" John of Salisbury here interrupted, "My lord, let it be discussed in private." But the archbishop answered simply, "As you wish." "Not so," said Fitzurse; "but as you wish." "Nay," rejoined Becket, "as *you* wish." The monks had already retired into an adjacent apartment; but the door-keeper threw the

door ajar, that all might see what was going on.* Scarcely, however, had Fitzurse begun his message, before Becket, as if feeling a sudden sense of danger, recalled his clergy, saying that such matters must not be discussed in secret. For a moment, while the knights were alone with Becket, the thought occurred to them, as they afterwards confessed, of murdering him with the shaft of his crozier, the only weapon within their reach.†

The monks returning, Fitzurse resumed his speech, in which he repeated all the allegations commonly brought against the archbishop, and accused him of plotting to deprive the king's son of his crown. Becket replied that no one, except his father, loved the young king more truly than he did, and that rather than take away his crown he would give him three or four crowns.

Fitzurse. "You have fomented disturbances in the king's realm, and the king requires you to answer for them within his Court."

Becket. "The sea shall never again come between me and my Church, unless I am dragged thence by the feet."

Fitzurse. "You have excommunicated the bishops, and must absolve them."

Becket. "It was not I, but the pope, and you must ask him for absolution." And he added that at the agreement on S. Mary Magdalene's Day, the king had given him leave to punish those who had invaded his office.

* Roger of Pontigny, pp. 161, 162.

† Grim, p. 71.

Fitzurse. "What do you say? Do you charge the king with treachery?"

Becket. "Reginald, Reginald, I do no such thing; but hundreds of prelates, nobles, and monks heard our agreement, and you yourself heard it too."

Fitzurse. "I was neither there, nor did I hear anything of the kind."

Becket. "God knows! but I am certain I saw you there."

Fitzurse swore "by God's wounds" that he had not been present, and all the knights angrily exclaimed that the imputation cast upon the king was not to be endured. Becket, in his turn, complained of the insults offered to him. "My servants have been assaulted," he said, "the casks of wine sent to me by the king have been carried off——"

Hugh de Moreville. "Why did you not complain to the king of these outrages? Why do you assume to punish them of your own authority?"

Becket (sharply). "Hugh, how proudly you lift your head! When the rights of the Church are violated, I will wait for no man's leave to avenge them."

Fitzurse. "From whom is it that you hold your archbishopric?"

Becket. "The spiritualities from God and the pope; the temporalities from the king."

Fitzurse. "Do you not own that you hold all from the king?"

Becket. "Not so; I will give to the king the things which are the king's, and to God the things which are God's."

The knights here started to their feet in a wild excess of anger, with eyes flashing fire, gnashing their teeth, tossing their gauntlets, and waving their arms to and fro. Becket rose and confronted them, his tall figure drawn up to its full height. "You threaten us, you threaten us. Are you going to excommunicate us all?" Fitzurse exclaimed. And one of the others, added in the confusion, "As I hope for God's mercy, he shall not do that; he has excommunicated too many already." "We tell you, in good faith," shouted Fitzurse, "that what you have said will recoil on your own head." "What!" cried Becket, "have you come to slay me? Then do I commit my cause to the Great Judge of all mankind, and will not be moved from my obedience to Him and my lord the pope, were all the swords in England hanging over my head! You cannot be more ready to strike than I am to suffer. Go, pursue those who would flee from you; as for me, I will meet you foot to foot in the Lord's battle."

Some of the clerks and servants, with a few soldiers of the household, here entered the chamber, and gathered round their master to defend him. "Ho, ye clerks and monks!" cried Fitzurse, "we order you in the king's name to seize that man, and guard him that he may not escape, until the king shall have ample justice on his person." Then they hurriedly retired, carrying with them Fitznigel, the seneschal, who called out to his master, "You see what they are doing with me!" He answered, "This is their hour, and that of the prince of dark-

ness." Lingering a moment at the door, they cried, "It is you who threaten." Becket requested them to release Fitznigel, and called on Hugh de Moreville to return and repeat the royal message. As they disappeared without, he raised his hand to his head, "as by a presentiment marking the place where he should receive their strokes," and exclaimed, "Here, here you shall find me ; here I will await you." *

The knights, shrieking, as they strode into the court, "To arms! To arms!" joined their companions whom they had left opposite the great gateway, secured the gate, removed the archbishop's porter, and stationed at the open wicket the treacherous Fitznigel and Simon de Croil, one of the knights of S. Augustine. Divesting themselves of their cloaks and gowns, the four assassins assumed their armour and buckled on their swords; Fitzurse, in addition, snatching an axe from a carpenter who was at work close by. On their return towards the hall, Osbert and Algar, two of the servants, closed and barred the doors, which the knights made a vain attempt to burst open. Thereupon, Robert de Broc, who had been familiar with the palace during its occupancy by his uncle Ranulf, led them into the orchard behind the kitchen, and, ascending a ladder, they crept through an oriel window into the hall, where they attacked and overpowered the servants on guard, and admitted

* The preceding account is based on a comparison of the various narratives of Fitz-Stephen, 290-296; Edward Grim, 70-73; Benedict, 58-62; and Roger of Pontigny, 161-164.

the rest of their party. The noise and clamour had frightened away most of the monks and clergy, and the archbishop was left with only a few faithful companions, who besought him with prayers and tears to take refuge in the church. Vain their entreaties; his mind was filled with the glory of anticipated martyrdom; and his friends found themselves compelled to lay violent hands on him to move him from his seat. They soon discovered that the usual approaches to the cathedral were guarded, and before they could reach the cloisters, two locked doors had to be passed. At the first there was a moment's pause of despair. Then one of the monks caught hold of the lock, and, to the surprise of all, it flew open, "as if it had been held together with glue." Again the archbishop was hurried along, and swept, struggling, reproaching, and impetuously desiring to be released, through the northern and eastern cloisters, until the door at the lower north transept of the cathedral was reached. Twice he gained his feet; and on the first of these occasions he insisted that his cross should precede him. A brief delay ensued, until Henry of Auxerre took his place as cross-bearer. At the transept-door Becket was met by some of the clergy who were chanting vespers in the choir. "Come in! come in!" they cried, in tones of anguish, "and let us die together!" "Nay," was the archbishop's answer, "go ye, and finish the service. So long as ye stand on the threshold, I will not enter." They retired a few paces, and he stepped inside the door, just as

the knights in pursuit of him advanced along the southern cloister. He might yet have escaped, for the winter-darkness was gathering in; hiding places and outlets were numerous; and his attendants and ecclesiastics would have faithfully covered his retreat. But he refused to withdraw, nor would he allow the door to be closed, observing that God's House must not be converted into a fortress, but sufficed for the protection of its own.*

The monks had hurried him up one of the flights of steps leading to the choir, which appeared to them in the character of a sanctuary, when Fitzurse broke into the cathedral, crying, "After me, King's men" (*Réaux!*) He was closely followed by his three companions, all fully armed, and brandishing battle-axes in their left hands, and by a party of soldiers and some of the townsmen, who had been compelled to join them. Fitzurse turned to the right of the central pillar; the others to the left. In the obscurity, for the darkness was broken only by the thin rays of the lamps which burnt before the different altars, they could but dimly discern a group of figures gathered on the choir-steps. "Stay!" they shouted; "where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the king and his kingdom?" To such a question no reply could be given, and Fitzurse, laying hold of a monk, then demanded, "Where is the archbishop?" "Here am I," answered Becket, calmly; "no traitor, but a priest of God. What do you want of me?" At this the murderers recoiled

* Edward Grim, p. 75.

a pace, and one of them, with a momentary compunction exclaimed, "Flee; thou art a dead man!" "Far be it from me," he said, "to flee at the sight of your swords." And, descending from the step on which he stood, he placed himself with his back against a pillar that then rose near S. Benedict's Chapel.

The knights drew round him, shouting, "Absolve the bishops whom you have excommunicated." "I cannot do other than I have done," he answered. "Reginald," he continued, "you have received many favours at my hands; why come you into my church armed?" Fitzurse, striking him in the breast with his axe, or hatchet, cried, "You shall die; I will tear out your heart!" "I am ready to die," said Becket, "that the Church, through my blood, may obtain peace and freedom; but I forbid you, in the name of God, to injure these my attendants, whether clerks or laymen." Unwilling to shed blood within the holy precincts, the knights pressed upon him, and sought to drag him from the church. Fitzurse seizing him by his pall, exclaimed, "Come with us; you are our prisoner!" With the assistance of one Hugh of Horsea, surnamed Mauclerc, they then endeavoured to throw him on Tracy's shoulders; but, setting his back against the pillar, and assisted by Grim,* he successfully resisted their violence. His temper heated with the struggle, he hurled at Fitzurse

* All the monks and clergy had fled, except Grim, Fitz-Stephen, and Robert of Merton, the archbishop's confessor.

the opprobrious word (perhaps not undeserved) of "Pander!" "You owe me allegiance," he continued; "you are my man; you dare not touch me." "I owe no allegiance," rejoined the angry baron, "contrary to my fealty to the king." Brandishing his sword, he cried, "Strike! strike!" and dashed off the archbishop's cap. Becket now saw that the crown for which he had longed was about to become his. He bowed his neck; he clasped his hands over his eyes, and murmured, "I commend my cause, and the cause of the Church, to God, to the Holy Virgin Mary, and the blessed martyr S. Denys of France." Tracy's sword flashed through the air. Though the blow was intercepted by the uplifted arm of the faithful and heroic Grim, it was delivered with such fury that, after almost severing the monk's arm, it fell upon Becket's bared head, "shaving off the top of the sacred crown (the tonsure) by which he had dedicated himself to God."* Grim, confused and disabled, fled to the nearest altar, where other wan-faced, trembling priests and monks had already taken refuge. Fitzurse in his turn dealt a heavy stroke; another from Tracy felled the archbishop to his knees. In falling, he raised his hands instinctively as if to cover his head, and cried, "Into Thy hand, O Lord, I commend my spirit!" A fourth blow was given by Brito, with the words, "Take that for the sake of my Lord William, the king's brother!" The sword shore off all that had been left of the tonsure, and struck upon the pavement with such violence

* Grim, p. 76.

that the point was broken. Lastly, Hugh Mauclerc set his foot on the neck of the victim's bleeding body, and with his sword forcing out the brains from the cloven skull, bespattered the pavement with them. "Let us be off, comrades," he exclaimed, "this traitor will rise no more." In the actual murder, Hugh de Moreville, the most ferocious of the four, had taken no part, contenting himself with guarding the doors lest any rescue should be attempted. When the dreadful deed was done, he, with the others, hurried out of the cathedral and across the cloisters, shouting the English war-cry, "King's men! King's men!" (*Réaux! Réaux!*) On their way to the palace they met and attacked a French servant of the Archdeacon of Sens, because he was lamenting the fate of the murdered archbishop. Then they began the work of plunder, breaking open desks and presses and coffers, and carrying off every article of value on which they could lay their hands. Two *cilices*, or shirts of sackcloth, "which," says Herbert of Bosham, "Christ's holy champion was wont to wear next to his sacred skin," they flung aside contemptuously. Yet these evidences of the primate's devotion deeply impressed some of the company, who muttered in a low voice, lest Tracy and Fitzurse should overhear them, "Truly this was a righteous man!" and retreated from the palace, beating their breasts with their hands. All documents of importance were handed to Ranulf de Broc in charge for the king; and, finally, the murderers

carried off the most valuable horses in the archbishop's stables.

That same night, Canterbury was sorely shaken by a terrible storm of rain and thunder, and the cathedral towers were shrouded in a darkness that might be felt.*

The confusion and alarm immediately following the murder had been so great that for a while the archbishop's body was suffered to lie in its blood. But Osbert, his chamberlain, procuring a light, bound up the mutilated head with a piece of his own shirt, and then admitted a pale, excited horror-stricken crowd, who, with sobs and tears, gathered round the corpse, lavished kisses on its hands and feet, smeared their eyes with the blood, and dipped their garments in it. "His pall and outer pelisse," says Benedict, "stained as they were with his blood, were, with a somewhat thoughtless piety, given to the poor for the good of his soul; and happy would the receivers have been had they not so heedlessly sold them for the sake of the money which they fetched." The remainder of the blood was collected by the monks in a vial, and the brains in a basin; after which, the corpse was placed before the high altar, and the multitude being dismissed, pale faces kept sorrowing watch around it until the night was spent. It was observed that, notwithstanding the quantity of blood which had flowed, the visage had not lost its colour, nor the eyes their prominence; the neck was not emaciated, nor were the shoulders

* Fitz-Stephen, p. 304.

fallen; the body preserved its elasticity, the skin its firmness. He seemed, in truth, says William of Canterbury, not so much to have breathed his last as to have closed his eyes and fallen into a deep sleep.

On the following day, the body, newly attired in full pontificals, was placed in a marble sarcophagus, which stood in the ancient crypt, behind the Virgin's shrine, and between the altars of S. Augustine and S. John Baptist. No public funeral was permitted; and no mass was said, for armed men having entered the cathedral it was regarded as desecrated; the bells were silent; the altars were stripped, and the crucifixes veiled; and the services were conducted in the chapter-house, without the aid of music.

Here our memoir of Becket may fitly end. The supposed miracles* wrought at his shrine, which retained its celebrity down to the sixteenth century; the penance publicly performed by Henry II. in July,

* "At first, miracles were wrought around his tomb, then through the whole crypt, then throughout the cathedral, throughout all Canterbury, throughout all England, throughout Normandy, France, Germany, and, in short, through the whole Church of Christ which is spread throughout the world. And that he might the more fully confirm, by renewing them, the ancient miracles of the saints, which had in some measure been blotted out from men's hearts through want of faith, he first, as if by way of prelude, began with *moderate miracles*, and so, ascending gradually, as the reports of his sanctity increased, attained the very highest, equalling, in a short time, the wonderful deeds of the Gospel and the Apostles. Thus, like a good householder, did he bring forth from his rich treasure things new and old for almost everybody who piously desired them, working wonders in our eyes, and by this novelty confirming what was old."—Gervase, 1297 (quoted by Robertson, p. 304.)

1172; the translation of the "martyr's" remains to a new and gorgeous tomb in 1220; the long succession of pilgrimages which Chaucer has immortalized; are subjects beyond the scope of the present narrative. Nor need we discuss the political consequences of the sacrilege and murder,—a murder wanting in no single detail of brutality that could add to its horror,—in which King Henry's violent words had involved him. The point that concerns us is the estimate that an impartial student should form of Becket's character and conduct. It will be seen that we are as little disposed to agree with his extreme panegyrists as with his extreme censors, with Canon Morris as with Mr. Anthony Froude. We regard him as a man of many faults and many virtues, who devoted himself with more sincerity than prudence, with all the energy of an impetuous disposition, with all the force of a strong, clear intellect, to the assertion of principles in which he heartily believed. Those principles seem to us capable of a two-fold construction, according as we consider them from the standpoint of the nineteenth or of the twelfth century, according as the mediæval Church is to us the bulwark of the poor and the asylum of the oppressed, or a vast sacerdotal machinery for crushing "free thought," and enslaving king, barons, and commons. It is our conviction that by resolutely defending them Becket did good service in his time to his Church and country; that, as Sir James Stephen observes, he helped to maintain moral against physical force, to control the

despotic tendencies of the Crown, and to prepare the way for our modern English freedom.

[The materials for a biography of this remarkable man, who, like most historical personages, has been as vehemently depreciated by one party, as he has been fervently panegyricized by another, are exceedingly abundant. Reference will be made by the student, in the first place, to the archbishop's own "Letters," a compilation of which has been made by Dr. Giles. Next come the contemporary biographers, whose writings are now in course of publication, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. Of these the most important are Herbert of Bosham, John of Salisbury (Bishop of Chartres), Roger of Pontigny, Benedict (Abbot of Peterborough), William Fitz-Stephen, and Edward Grim. Of some value also is the French metrical life by Garnier, of Pont St. Mayence. The contemporary chroniclers must also be consulted, such as Roger de Hoveden, William of Newburgh, and Ralph de Diceto. Among modern writers we have consulted Dr. Pauli, "Geschichte von England;" J. C. Robertson, "Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury;" Robertson's "History of the Christian Church;" Dr. Giles' "Life and Letters of Thomas à Becket;" Dean Milman's "History of Latin Christianity;" Archdeacon Churton, "The Early English Church;" A. Hurrell Froude, "Remains" (edit. 1839); Professor Stubbs, "Constitutional History of England;" Dean Stanley, "Historical Memorials of Canterbury;" and the papers by Mr. J. A. Froude, in *The Nineteenth Century* (for 1877); and by Dr. E. A. Freeman, in *The Contemporary Review* (1878). See also Ozanam, "Deux Chanceliers d'Angleterre;"* and the *National Review* for 1860.]

* A strongly coloured pro-catholic book is Buss's "Der Heilige Thomas, und sein Kampf für die Freiheit der Kirche." (The Holy Thomas, and his Struggles for the Freedom of the Church), Mainz, 1865.

STEPHEN LANGTON, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A.D. 1170—1228.

THE place and date of Archbishop Langton's birth are not known with any certainty. Some writers are of opinion that he derived his name from Langton, a village near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire. Others, as for instance, Dean Hook, connect him with the Langtons of Yorkshire, because at an exceptionally early age he obtained preferment in York Minster, and because his brother was promoted to the northern primacy. That he came of honourable lineage is probable, though we have no other guide on this point than a vague statement in one of Pope Innocent's letters, "*natus est de parentibus tibi fidelibus et devotis.*" His education was completed at the University of Paris, which, in the twelfth century, enjoyed a well-merited repute as a school of theology. A strong clear intellect, combined with unfailing industry and great steadiness of purpose, soon raised him above his fellows; and, in the then narrow limit of the world of letters a young man who was not only deeply versed in the

scholastic philosophy, but a competent biblical student, and a poet of more than ordinary excellence, could not fail to attract attention. Such was his fame, and such the esteem in which he was held, that, though a foreigner, he was elected to the distinguished office of Chancellor or President of the Schools of Paris. He was also made Dean of Rheims ; and he received the gift of two rich prebends, one in Notre Dame, and the other in York Cathedral.

During his student days at Paris he formed an intimate acquaintance with Lothaire, a young Italian of noble birth, and a kinsman of Pope Clement III. To this circumstance he owed his promotion, at the early age of twenty-eight, to the rank of Cardinal. Nor did his good fortune end here. He was elevated to the Papal throne by the title of Innocent III. (A.D. 1198). The tiara was scarcely placed upon his brow before he recalled his friendship with the illustrious English scholar ; and nominating him to a place in his household, he summoned him to Rome. The summons could not be ignored, but apparently it was very unwelcome to Langton, who, at this time of his life, was enthusiastically devoted to the pursuit of letters, and rejoiced in the calm and repose of his beloved university. He obeyed, however, the invitation of his former friend, who received him at Rome with a most cordial welcome. His public lectures were attended by large and brilliant audiences, and not infrequently honoured by the pope himself. It was quite as much a testimony to his genius, his erudition, and his blamelessness of life,

as a mark of loyal friendship, when, in 1206, Innocent appointed him cardinal-priest of S. Chrysogorus. The appointment, when known in England, was warmly approved, and drew from King John a congratulatory letter.

Dean Hook reminds us * that at this period the office of cardinal did not carry with it the power and eminence which afterwards belonged to it. As yet it was not even distinguished by the red hat; an emblem of dignity which was not granted until 1245, while the well-known robe of office, the purple cloak or mantle, dates only from 1255.† It would seem, however, that a cardinal, though he had not received episcopal consecration, was allowed, like many abbots, to officiate *in pontificalibus*; and, at all events, within the bounds of his cure or charge, to pronounce the benediction. That he did not rank as superior to a legate is evident from the fact that Pandulf, who was never a cardinal, and, indeed, during the period of his residence in England, was simply a sub-deacon, exercised authority over Langton himself. But only the cardinals, according to a decree of Stephen IV., in 769, were eligible to be raised to the papacy; and only by the cardinals, according to a decree of Nicholas II., could the pope be elected. They had not assumed, as yet, the pretension to rank with princes of royal birth;

* Dean Hook, "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," ii. 662, 663.

† The title of "Your Eminence" was conferred by Pope Urban VIII., in 1630.

and the consistory, at all events, as now organized, did not exist. Their influence, nevertheless, was considerable; for they were the secret advisers of a power which asserted its supremacy over the whole of Christendom, and professed to make and unmake kings. And though their venality had long been their reproach, yet the very fact that it was considered worth while to bribe them, proves the importance of their voice and vote in the various causes brought before the Roman *Curia*.

Meanwhile, an event had taken place in England, which was destined to have no slight effect upon the fortunes of its Church. In July, 1205, died Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, the most sagacious and disinterested of King John's advisers. The consequences of his decease were sufficiently serious, so far as John himself was concerned, for in a critical and dangerous position he lost the counsel which had hitherto saved him from his errors; the moderating influence which had restrained his rashness and controlled his temper. But they were even more serious as regarded the Crown, for it marked "the termination of the alliance between the king and the clergy, which had been cemented by Lanfranc, and had not been completely broken by the quarrel of Anselm, or even by that of Becket."* The right of election to the vacant archbishopric became immediately a subject of contention between three parties, the king, the bishops within the jurisdiction of the metropolitan see, and the monks of

* Professor Stubbs, "Constitutional History," i. 519.

Christ Church. The last named had at each successive election put forward their traditional claim. but had almost always been pushed aside by the Crown or the bishops. On the present occasion, they devised an ingenious scheme for securing what they believed to be their right. Without waiting for the royal licence, they hastily elected their sub-prior, Reginald, and despatched him to Rome to secure the papal confirmation before King John could interfere. Reginald, however, was a man of weak character, and of no intellectual pretensions; and the older monks, on reflection, grew ashamed of their choice. They exerted all their authority with their younger brethren to obtain a voidance of the election; and with the king's consent, and at his instigation, appointed John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich, a servile dependent of the Court. The bishops were persuaded to approve of the election, and the new primate was formally enthroned in the presence of the sovereign.*

Reginald had travelled to Rome with full archiepiscopal parade, assuming, in violation of his oath to the chapter, and certainly in opposition to his own interests, the title of Archbishop-elect. He, reached the "Eternal City" in safety, but before he could secure the favour of the pope or the *Curia*, twelve monks of Christ Church arrived, on the part of John de Gray and the king, to represent that his election had been cancelled, and to obtain the *pallium* for the Bishop of Norwich. At the same

* Roger of Wendover, pp. 193-195.

time appeared a body of delegates from the suffragan-bishops to support their claim to concurrent election, that is, that an election of the chapter was not valid unless approved by the bishops. The pope was then called upon to arbitrate between the conflicting interests (A.D. 1206).

Some months elapsed before he pronounced his decision as to the body in whom the right of election was vested. In conformity with precedent, he gave it in favour of the monks. He then proceeded to examine into the respective claims of Reginald and Bishop John de Gray, and decided against both. He declared that the election of Reginald was void because it had been made only by a minority of the monks, and without the concurrence of the suffragan bishops. The application of John for the confirmation of his nomination was likewise rejected on the plea of irregularity, though it is not easy to see how such a plea could be justified. The pope contended that John de Gray had been elected before Reginald's election had been invalidated by the supreme authority; but he himself had recognized that this authority lay with the monks. However, having declared the see vacant, he proceeded to fill it with a nominee of his own; and his choice fell upon Stephen Langton. We may infer from this that Innocent did not rightly understand Langton's character. He probably expected to find in him a loyal partisan and a grateful supporter. He did not remember, or did not appreciate, his firmness of purpose and independence of judgment. Never was any

one less fitted or less likely to play the part of an instrument, willingly or unwillingly. He was made altogether of a fibre too firm and tenacious to yield up his will or his opinions at the bidding of another.

The twelve monks of Christ Church then at Rome were ordered to proceed at once to the election of the pope's friend; but they pleaded in excuse the oath they had taken to King John, to elect no one but John de Gray. A threat of excommunication, however, induced them to yield, with the exception of Elias of Branfield, who had the audacity to offer Pope Innocent a bribe of 3000 marks, if he would confirm the king's choice. Innocent, while rejecting the offer with contempt, was unwilling to provoke the king to an open rupture, and, in his turn, resorted to the expedient of bribery, sending him a costly ring, set with many jewels (the king's weakness for precious stones was a matter of notoriety), accompanied by a letter explaining their symbolic signification.* Soon afterwards, he announced the election of Stephen Langton, commending him as a profound scholar, and a man of the loftiest character, whose advice in temporal and spiritual matters the king would be wise to follow. It was with no little reluctance, he added, that he sent him to Canterbury, so highly did he esteem his companionship.

John gave orders, however, that the papal messengers should be stopped at Dover. In the spring of 1207 his own envoys arrived at Rome, bearing epistles which overflowed with the royal anger. He

* Matthew Paris, p. 202.

had received, he said, a two-fold insult; first, in the rejection of his trusty adviser, the Bishop of Norwich; secondly, in the appointment of a stranger, who had been bred up in France among the king's enemies. How was it that the pope and the *Curia* undervalued the English alliance? and why did they forget that they drew more of their wealth from England than from any kingdom beyond the Alps? He declared that if his wishes were disregarded, he would cut off all communication between England and Rome. When he required counsel, he would not seek it beyond his own dominions, but apply to the men of learning and piety who adorned his court.

The pope did not betray the deep anger with which the royal defiance filled him. He replied calmly,* with just panegyrics of the erudition and virtues of Langton, who, he remarked, could not be an utter stranger to the king, as he had written to him thrice since his elevation to the cardinalate. He warned him of the danger into which he would plunge by rebelling against the Church, and reminded him that in the holy cause of its liberties the glorious martyr S. Thomas had shed his blood. But John, encouraged by John de Grey, whose disappointment had converted him into a bitter opponent of the papal claims, persisted in his refusal to receive Langton. He even threatened to hang him immediately on his arrival in England. The

* We do not find in this epistle the "haughty insolence" which Dean Hook finds in it.

pope resolved, therefore, to dispense with the royal assent, and ordered the consecration of Langton without further delay. Accordingly, it took place at Viterbo, on the 17th of June, 1207. William of London, Eustace of Ely, and Mauger of Worcester, three of the most influential of the English bishops, were then instructed to make a final attempt at a pacific settlement with the king, and to intimate that, if delayed or frustrated, his kingdom would be placed under an interdict.

Meanwhile, the king had adopted the measures after his own heart. Always terrible to the weak, and servile before the strong, he let his anger fall upon the monks of the Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. It was true that they had given no just cause of offence; for in electing Langton they had kept strictly within their own rights, they had obeyed their spiritual lord, the pontiff, and they had yielded only to avoid an excommunication. But John yearned for victims, and the monks were feeble. He confiscated their estates; he banished them from the country; and he called in the clergy of the rival monastery of S. Augustine's to keep up the religious services of the cathedral (July 5, 1207).*

But when he began to reflect, he saw how terrible a thing an interdict must be,† and the reflection

* Matthew Paris, p. 224.

† Wordsworth has graphically described the effect of this the most powerful of the papal weapons:—

“Realms quake by terrors; proud arbitress of grace,
The Church, by mandate shadowing forth the power

inclined him to an effort to propitiate the pope. In January, 1208, therefore, he entered into negotiations with the three bishops named by the pope, announcing his willingness to comply with the papal monition, so far as his council should think advisable, and saving always his royal dignity and the liberties of the Crown. This latter phrase recalls Becket's famous proviso, "saving the honour of God," and, like it, was intended to reserve full freedom of action for an opportune time. The king also entered into correspondence with Langton, and permitted his brother Simon to visit England. From a letter which John addressed to the men of Kent, we learn that an interview took place between them.

"The king," so runs the royal missive, "to the men of the whole of Kent, sends greeting. Know ye, that Master Simon of Langton came to us at Winchester, on the Wednesday next before Mid-Lent (March 12th), and in the presence of our bishops, prayed us to receive Master Stephen Langton, his

She arrogates o'er Heaven's eternal door,
Closes the gates of every sacred place.
Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace
All sacred things are covered; cheerful morn
Grows sad as night: no seemly garb is worn,
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are dumb;
Ditches are graves—funeral rites denied;
And in the churchyard he must take his bride
Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly come
Into the passive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb."

brother, as Archbishop of Canterbury. When we spoke to him of preserving our royal dignity in this matter, he replied that he would do nothing for us in respect to it, unless we placed ourselves altogether at his mercy. We make this known to you, that you may understand what ill and injury have been inflicted upon us. We command you to give credence to what Reginald of Cornhill (who had charge of the temporalities of the archbishopric) shall tell you on our behalf concerning the aforesaid transaction between ourself, the said bishops, and the said Simon, and concerning the due execution of our precept herein. Witness ourself at Winchester, the 14th day of March (A.D. 1208)."

The papal commissioners, on the 17th, made a final effort to bring the king to terms. With many tears they implored him to receive the archbishop, to recall the exiled monks, and to save his subjects and himself from the dire consequences of an interdict. John broke out into one of those almost maniacal excesses of anger to which the Plantagenets were liable. He hurled the most terrible oaths at the pope and cardinals. He swore "by the teeth of God,"—such was his strange and blasphemous imprecation—that if Innocent dared to impose an interdict upon his kingdom, he would expel all the bishops and clergy, and any Roman priests whom he found within its borders would send back to Rome, with their eyes plucked out and their noses slit, that they might always carry about them the signs of their disgrace. And, finally, he menaced the three

commissioners themselves with violence if they did not immediately quit his presence.

Accordingly, on the 23rd of March, the bishops obeying the orders of the pope, proclaimed an interdict; and then, accompanied by the Bishops of Bath and Hereford, fled to France, where, says Roger of Wendover,* they lived in luxurious abundance, and, instead of boldly defending the Lord's honour, gave up their flocks to the ravening wolf.

The king made haste to confiscate the property of all the clergy who, in obedience to the interdict, ceased to perform divine service in the churches; and showed every intention of continuing his defiance of Rome. The burden which had fallen on the kingdom was heavy; but he cared nothing for a suffering and a sorrow in which he did not share. And this was the special injustice of the extreme form of papal discipline; it involved the innocent in its terrors; it was felt most keenly by the feeblest. When it is considered that, so long as the interdict endured, the churches from the Tweed to the Channel were all closed, the sacred bells all silent; that the only clergy who were to be seen, gliding stealthily to and fro, were those permitted to bestow on new-born infants a hasty baptism, or to hear the confession of the dying, and administer to them, and them only, the Blessed Sacrament; that the dead were flung out of the courts, and buried, without prayer or candle or tolling bell, in some unconsecrated place, in ditch or dung-heap; it will be

* Roger of Wendover, p. 224.

admitted that the punishment was one which no earthly authority should ever have had power to inflict. And let us recollect that, as Dean Milman points out,* only those can judge of all it was and all it meant, who know how completely, six and seven centuries ago, the entire life of every class of the people was influenced by and absorbed in the ritual and daily ordinances of the Church. Every act of importance was then advised by monk or priest. Even to the less religious the gloom of the interdict was something palpable; for the Church's festivals were the only holidays, the Church's processions the only spectacles, and the Church's ceremonies the only amusements. To those with whom religion was a reality, or to whom it was an enslaving superstition, who can tell how bitter must have been the anguish, how profound the humiliation to have their children thus privately baptized; their daughters married without the Church's blessing; their dead buried without the Church's farewell rites; to hear neither prayer nor chant; to look round upon a world given up to the unchecked power of the devil and his evil spirits, with no saint to implore the mercy and no sacrifice to avert the wrath of God; when the sun was veiled, and the images hidden from the worshipper's rapt gaze; when the intercourse between man and his Father was apparently broken off altogether, and souls abandoned to perish, or reluctantly permitted absolution only in the Valley of the Shadow!

* Dean Milman, "History of Latin Christianity," v. 290.

The interdict, however, though it crushed the people, had no effect upon their king. He seized upon it as a means of refilling his empty treasury. He banished the bishops and priests who obeyed the pope; seized the bishoprics and abbeys, and confiscated their lands; shut up the barns of the clergy, and marked them as royal property; and declared every ecclesiastic "beyond the law" who acknowledged the interdict, so that, if robbed or ill-used, redress or protection was alike denied. If an outlaw, red-handed from the murder of a priest, was brought into the royal presence, John commanded his release; he had rid him, he would say, of an enemy. Though contrary to the law of the Church, the marriage of priests had long been tacitly allowed; but John seized upon the unrecognized wives, and released them only for considerable sums. In these arbitrary measures, in which he revenged upon the innocent and unoffending, the papal act which had in like manner thrown upon them the burden and the punishment, so that they suffered almost equally from the king and the pope, John was counselled, and, perhaps, sometimes instigated, by four great prelates, whose influence should have been employed to restrain him: Peter of Winchester, John de Gray of Norwich, Philip of Durham, and the Prior of Beaulieu. The people had *their* revenge also, in lampoon and ballad. And the ecclesiastics gave vent to their feelings in rude rhyming Latin, a specimen of which may amuse the reader:—

"In Norwicensis bestia!
 Audi quid dicat veritas,
 Qui non intrat per ostia
 Fur est, an de hoc dubitas?
 Heu! cecidisti gravius
 Quam Cato quondam tertius;
 Cum præsumpto dictu
 Justa ruat judicia.
 Exemptus per dolum Simonis,
 Wintoniensis armiger
 Præsidet ad Scaccarium,
 Ad computandum impiger,
 Piger ad evangelium;
 Regis revolvens rotulum,
 Sic lucrum Lucam superat,
 Marco, Marcum præponderat,
 Et libræ librum subjicit."

The rough force of this diatribe can hardly be given in English, but its general meaning may be gathered from the following free version:—

"Hail, thou beast of Norwich,
 Hear what the truth declareth:
 Who enters not in at the doorway
 Is a robber: this dost thou doubt, man?
 Ah, thy downfall is heavier
 Than was that of the third of the Catos,
 When, for presumptuous speaking,
 He fell through a righteous judgment.
 Bought through the craft of Simon,
 The Winchesterian soldier
 At the treasury presideth,
 Right skilful in calculations,
 But knowing nought of the Gospel!
 As the rolls of the king he revolveth
 Lucre to Luke he preferreth,
 A mark to S. Mark he preferreth,
 Yea, a pound (*librum*) to the Book (*liber*) he preferreth!"

With the large sums of money accumulated by his arbitrary measures John was able to organize vast military preparations ; and he carried his conquering arms into both Wales and Ireland. He grew richer every year, and as he grew richer grew more contumacious, rejecting all the conciliatory efforts of the pope, and when these were succeeded by menaces, affecting the greatest indifference. At the intercession of Langton, who, like his predecessor Becket, had taken up his residence at Pontigny, Innocent had to some extent relaxed the severity of the interdict ; and he determined that his next blow should be delivered at the king himself. It was in 1209 that he issued a commission to the fugitive bishops, Ely, London, and Worcester, authorizing them to pronounce the king excommunicate ; and ordering the sentence of excommunication to be read every Sunday and fast-day in all the conventual churches of the kingdom. The fear in which John was held prevailed, however, over the submission usually given to the pope. Not a single bishop found courage enough to obey the papal command ; the whole clergy remained silent. Through secret channels, not the less, the fact of the king's excommunication transpired ; it was soon whispered in the market-places ; it became known in the remotest villages. And then the clergy had an opportunity of discovering what they might expect from an enraged sovereign. Geoffrey, Archdeacon of Norwich, who held a post of trust in the royal exchequer, regarded it as a matter of conscience not to serve an

excommunicated prince, and retired to Norwich. John immediately sent messengers after him; he was arrested, loaded with chains, "cased in a surcoat of lead," and flung into prison, where he soon afterwards died.*

Dean Milman observes on the remarkable circumstance that while an interdict of only one year's duration brought to his knees the able and haughty Philip Augustus of France, the weak, tyrannical, and almost contemptible John defied for four years its awful effects, and even for some time those of personal excommunication. More than two years after the interdict, and when the sentence of excommunication was well known, King John held the Christmas festival at Windsor (A.D. 1210); and not one of his great barons declined to partake of the sacrament with him. We think that Dean Milman greatly underrates the intellectual capacity of King John, and altogether errs in speaking of him as weak and contemptible; but the fact to which he refers is not the less remarkable, and strikingly illustrates the independent position of the English Church. At no time did it slavishly register the decrees of Rome. And, whether owing to their insular position or to deeper causes, it is equally true that the English people never fell into that condition of bondage which was the lot of most of the European nations. Dean Milman is un-

* In many places, however, the clergy remained faithful to the king, and did not observe the interdict. In the dioceses of Durham, Winchester, and Norwich it was but a *brutum fulmen*.

doubtedly justified in arguing that, if John had been a popular sovereign; had he won to his side by prudent conciliation, by a just respect for their rights, by a dignified appeal to their patriotism, the barons and commons of England; had he even appealed to their worse passions, and bribed them with a share in the confiscated property of the Church; the thunders of the greatest of the popes would have raged ineffectually about his head. But while he opposed the aggressive exercise of the papal power, he did his best to incur the reproach and hatred of all classes of his subjects. As the old chronicler, Peter Langtoft, says, "He was a fole of life, and vsed lichorie." His sensuality and his greed were equally boundless. His shameless profligacy dishonoured the families of his greatest nobles; the stern provisions of his forest-laws fell heavily on the poor; he persecuted the Jews with unrelenting cruelty; he loaded the country with an intolerable burden of taxation. As Professor Stubbs epigrammatically expresses it, he trusted no man, and no man trusted him. When, therefore, the pope declared (in 1211) that, unless he submitted, he would issue a bull deposing him from his throne and absolving his subjects from their allegiance, and that he would entrust the execution of his mandate to Philip of France, the weakness of his position was immediately revealed. The pope's action would have been in vain but for the disaffection that existed in the breasts of the English people. This disaffection was encouraged by the

authority of the pope to manifest itself; and it gave strength and force and reality to what would otherwise have been an empty threat.

Meanwhile, John had pursued his usual crafty and temporising policy. In 1209, he had professed a desire that Langton should return to England, and had forwarded to him a safe-conduct. But when this was examined, it proved to be addressed to Langton as a Cardinal of the Roman Church, and not as Archbishop of Canterbury; Langton, therefore, refused to make use of it. In the following year, after some negotiation on the part of the king, the archbishop crossed the Channel to Dover, for the purpose of a personal interview; but to this John objected, and, as he declined to restore the property he had wrested from the Church, the prospect of a settlement became as far removed as ever. In the following year John, on his part, repaired to Dover to meet the archbishop; but the latter on discovering that all the barons were absent who had guaranteed him protection, shrank from placing himself in the hands of a monarch notoriously indifferent to the ordinary rules of honour. His caution was justified by the words which the king addressed (in August, 1211) to the papal envoys at Northampton. "Ask of me what you will, and I will grant it; but never will I grant that Stephen a safe-conduct which will prevent me from hanging him by the neck the moment he sets foot on land of mine."

The Welsh princes hastened to take advantage

of the papal threat, and renewed hostilities against the king. He hanged their hostages, and levied an army for a fresh invasion of Wales; but being apprised of the existence of a conspiracy, he did not venture to place himself at its head, and disbanding it "in panic fear," retired to Nottingham Castle. After a fortnight's seclusion he recovered his energies, and arrested some of the barons, not because they were involved in the designs of the conspirators, but because he was afraid of their power.* By this high-handed procedure, he alarmed the few nobles who had really meditated revolt; and their leaders, Eustace de Vesci and Robert Fitz-Walter, fled to the court of the French king, who was assembling his forces for an invasion.

At a great Council held at Soissons on the 5th of April, 1213, Stephen Langton and the Bishops of London and Ely were received by the French king, his bishops, clergy, and nobles, and recited to them the papal sentence of deposition, requiring of the King of France and all others, under promise of the remission of their sins, to take up arms against the excommunicated King of England, and place on his throne a worthier sovereign. King John met the crisis with his characteristic energy; and, indeed, had he possessed greater courage his ability would have made him one of the foremost of the English kings. He collected on Barham Downs, near Dover, an army of 50,000 men, and issued orders that every vessel capable of carrying six horses should assemble

* Matthew Paris, p. 231.

at Portsmouth, to join in an expedition against Normandy. English patriotism prevailed over the feelings of hatred and disgust with which John was regarded; and brave efforts were made to resist a French invasion. John, however, was well aware that these efforts were not inspired by any loyalty to himself, and in his superstitious alarm at a prophecy of Peter of Wakefield, that on the coming Feast of the Ascension he should cease to be king,*—in his secret dread of the effects of the papal excommunication—he suddenly resolved on absolute submission.

The state of affairs is very clearly explained by Dean Hook. The king stood in immediate need of protection from his enemies at home and abroad. The barons were anxious to create some power in the State to which they could appeal, without having

* To this incident Shakespeare alludes in his historical play of "King John" (Act iv. Scene 2):—

*"The Bastard. . . . As I travelled hither through the land,
I find the people strangely fantasied;
Possess'd with rumours, full of idle dreams;
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear;
And here's a prophet, that I brought with me
From forth the streets of Pomfret, whom I found
With many hundreds treading on his heels;
To whom he sung, in rude harsh-sounding rhymes,
That, ere the next Ascension-day at noon,
Your highness should deliver up your crown.*

K. John. Thou idle dreamer, wherefore didst thou so?

Peter. Foreknowing that the truth will fall out so.

*K. John. Hubert, away with him; imprison him;
And on that day at noon, whereon he says
I shall yield up my crown, let him be hanged."*

recourse to arms, against the despotism of the Crown. The clergy desired to secure themselves in the enjoyment of the temporalities of the Church. Thus all required the protection of some authority whom all would agree to acknowledge; and all were of opinion that this authority could be more safely vested in the Pope of Rome than in the King of France—in a distant friend than a hostile neighbour. But, adds Dean Hook, it is a maxim in law that protection and subjection are reciprocal; and that if the Pope of Rome were to afford protection, he must be acknowledged paramount. Nor does it seem that the great barons objected to John's humiliation; if, indeed, men whom the feudal system had accustomed to the relations between an independent prince and his over-lord, saw in it any humiliation.* When he made his submission to the pope, accepting Langton as archbishop, undertaking to refund to the churches the money extorted from them, and surrendering his kingdom to the see of Rome, it seems to have been unanimously accepted as a solution of all difficulties.†

A graphic narration of the chief incidents of the contest which ended thus ingloriously for the king is given by the old chronicler, Peter Langtoft:—

"Oft was the pleynt made unto the pape;
The manfesours ateynt, † and cursed over the nape.
The pape of ther erroure had fulle grete pite;
He sent to ther socoure two legates over the se.

* Professor Stubbs, "Constitutional History," i. 522.

† Hook, "Archbishops of Canterbury," ii. 693.

‡ The evil-doers were attainted.

At Douere thei gan ariue, Pandolf and Durand,
 To London gan thei driue; the barons ther thei fand.
 Through Pandolf's prechyng ther warre was besucht till ende;
 The barons and the kyng were made felawtes and frendes,
 Asoiled * are alle on euen; but the kyng an oth suore,
 He suld him venge on Steuen, whider so euer he fore,†
 And of the fourtene monkes, where man not tham finde,
 Be beten alle foukes,‡ or in prison thaim binde.
 Pandolf and Durand did com forth the Ersbishop,
 And the monkes forth thei fand,§ Jon said, thei sulse haddes hap.
 Pandolf proned the kyng, in his disputeson,
 He mayntend wrongfulle thing, and will'd to no reson.
 He proned thorch wisdom in ilk manere cas,
 That the kyng misnam,|| and did grete trespas.
 Allegate the kyng he paesed,¶ so that the warre was ent,
 And ilka clerke sesed ** ageyn to haf his rent." ††

" John received at Ewell, near Dover, on the 9th of May, 1213, the sub-deacon Pandulf, whom the pope had sent to England as legate; and by the 13th, the terms of settlement had been arranged. On the 15th, at Dover, these were formulated in a charter, which the king sealed and signed in the presence of his ministers and barons. Thus he fulfilled the prediction of Peter of Wakefield; for he had virtually ceased to be other than a lieutenant and servant of the pope, before the Feast of Ascension. On the vigil of that great Feast (May the 16th), the legate, attended by priests and choristers, and glittering with all the insignia of his office, entered

* Absolved.

† Whithersoever he went.

‡ Be beaten all to funks (i.e. "till they stank again.")

§ Found. || Mistook. ¶ Altogether he appeased the king.

** Each clerk was to receive his rent.

†† Pefer Langtoft, ed. Hearne, i. 211.

the Church of the Templars; where he was joined by King John, who placed in the legate's hands the record of his humiliation. This remarkable document was worded as follows:—

“Be it known to all men, that, having in many things offended God and our Holy Mother the Church, we, as satisfaction for our sins, and in order to humble ourselves duly after the example of Him Who humbled Himself to death for our sake, we, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, with our own free will and the common consent of our barons, do bestow upon, and yield up to God, to his holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to our lord the Pope Innocent, and his successors, all our kingdom of England, and all our kingdom of Ireland, to be held as a fief of the Holy See, with the payment of one thousand marks and the customary Peter's Pence. We reserve to ourself, and to our heirs, the royal rights in the administration of justice. And we declare this deed irrevocable, and if any of our successors shall attempt to annul it, we declare him thereby to have forfeited his crown.”*

The witnesses to this degrading surrender of the rights of the Crown and the liberties of the people, were the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Norwich, the Earls of Pembroke and Salisbury, and some others, and four barons.

* This degrading act of submission was annulled, however, in 1366, by Edward III., with the hearty concurrence of his Parliament. The then estates, peers, prelates, and commons, pledged themselves to defend, if necessary, the cause of the king against the Pope.

Next day took place the final scene in this surprising melodrama. Swearing on the Holy Gospels, John did homage to the Pope in the following terms :—"I, John, by the grace of God, King of England and Lord of Ireland, from this time forth and for ever will be faithful to God and the ever-blessed Peter, and to the Church of Rome, and to my liege lord, the Pope Innocent, and his Catholic successors. I will not be accessory in act or word, by consent or counsel, to aught by which they may suffer loss of life, or limb, or freedom. I will keep them harmless from any wrong-doing of which I may learn; I will avert all in my power; I will warn them by myself, or my trusty messengers, of any evil meditated against them. I will keep profoundly secret all communications with which they may entrust me by letter or message. I will aid in the maintenance and defence of the patrimony of S. Peter, and specially will I hold this kingdom of England and Ireland, to the utmost of my power, against all enemies; so help me God and His Holy Gospels. Amen." This humiliation of King John's may be fitly paralleled with the Emperor Frederick's at Canossa; yet it seems to have excited less surprise among his contemporaries; if, indeed, they can be said to have regarded it as a humiliation at all. We shall soon have good reason to admire the thoroughly English spirit and true patriotism of Stephen Langton; yet, Englishman and patriot as he was, he does not seem to have disapproved of a submission which, to Englishmen of the nineteenth

century, appears in the light of a dishonour and a degradation. When Shakespeare puts into the mouth of King John the indignant outburst :—

“ No Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;
But as we, under Heaven, are supreme head,
So, under Him, that great supremacy
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a neutral hand ; ”

he uses words which would have befitted Elizabeth, but which John would certainly never have employed, because, theoretically, the supremacy of the pope had always been admitted by his predecessors.

In the month of July, the king despatched a letter to Stephen Langton, earnestly requesting him and the exiled prelates to return ; and on the road, at Winchester, the king and the archbishop, for the first time, met. As the magnificent procession of the latter was seen to defile over the green hills of Hampshire, the king went forth to meet him on Magdalene Hill, and, flinging himself at his feet, in broken words implored his forgiveness. Langton and his bishops could not refrain from tears at the sight of so much humility. They raised him from the ground, and the royal retinue mingling with the primate's cavalcade, all took their way into the ancient city of the English kings, chanting the Fifty-first Psalm. Between the archbishop and the Bishop of London went the king, and in this order they reached the great western door of Walkelin's glorious minster, where the chief barons and clergy of the kingdom

were in waiting, and a multitude of the common people "weeping and praying." The vast procession then turned to the south, and entered the chapter-house, where, on a copy of the Holy Gospels, the king swore "that he would love Holy Mother Church and her lawful ministers; that, to the utmost of his power, he would defend and maintain them against all their enemies; that he would renew all the good laws of his ancestors, especially those of King Edward, and annul all evil ones; that he would judge his people according to the just decrees of his courts, and to every man restore his lawful rights." * From the terms of this oath, it is evident that the Church was still the zealous advocate and upholder of the civil liberties of the people.

The ceremony at an end, the procession passed from the chapter-house into the cathedral, amid the shouts of the spectators. The Holy Eucharist was duly celebrated; an act of independence—for the interdict was not yet removed—which showed that Langton was no servile votary of the Holy See. Three days of festivity celebrated the reconciliation which had so solemnly been effected, as was supposed, between the Church and the Crown; and, immediately afterwards, John resumed his intrigues. He secured the safety of his person by assuming the cross, and making a vow to join the Crusades; and he had secured his power, as he imagined, by his

* "Et omnes homines suos secundum justa curiæ suæ judicia judicaret, quodque singulis redderet jura sua."—Matthew Paris, p. 239. Cf. Roger of Wendover, p. 238.

oath of fealty to the pope. No doubt he expected that Langton, as a Cardinal of the Roman Church, would implicitly obey the pope's behests, even to the destruction of the independence of the Church of England; but he, no less than Innocent, had mistaken Langton's character.

Encouraged by a victory of the English fleet over the French at Damme, John resolved on avenging himself on Philip of France by an invasion of Poitou. He never doubted but that the barons, influenced by martial ardour, would respond at once to his summons. But they did not love him, and had no intention of gratifying his ambition. The northern barons in a body refused to follow him, pleading their poverty, and declaring that their tenure did not compel them to serve abroad. "They were for the most part," says Professor Stubbs,* "members of that second aristocracy which had grown up on the ruins of the Conquest families, and had no stake in Normandy. They had been trained under the eye of Glanville and Richard de Lacy; had been uniformly faithful to the king against the greater feudatories; had manfully discharged their duties in the defence against the Scots; and had already begun to show that progression towards political liberty and self-government which marks them during later history; for they were the forefathers of the great north country party which fought the battle of the Constitution during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries."

* Professor Stubbs, "Constitutional History," i. 525.

John prepared to punish his recalcitrant barons, and for this purpose began a rapid march northwards. But at Northampton he was overtaken by Archbishop Langton, who had espoused the cause of the nobles as that of right and justice, and severely condemned the king for arming against them before they had been tried and proved guilty in the royal courts. John replied to his reproaches with sarcasm, advising him to refrain from meddling with State affairs. Nothing dismayed, the archbishop followed him to Nottingham, threatening to excommunicate every one who should engage in the war before the barons had been tried. John then gave way, and promised a legal and judicial investigation.

Meanwhile, Langton had in another direction given proof of his zeal for the good government of the realm. In order to ascertain what sums must be repaid to the plundered bishops, the justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, summoned a general assembly to meet at S. Alban's on the 4th of August, bishops and barons, and also, from each township on the royal demesne, its reeve, and four legal men ("*quatuor legales homines cum praeposito*").* Before

* "The meeting at S. Albans is the first occasion on which we find any historical proof that representatives were summoned to a national council. The reeve and four men were probably called upon merely to give evidence as to the value of the royal lands; but the fact that so much besides was discovered at the time, and that some important measures touching the people at large flowed directly from the action of the Council, gives to their appearance there a great significance. To the first representative assembly

claimed, with brutal energy, "When he arrives in hell, he may go and salute Hubert Walter; for, by the feet of God, I am now, for the first time, king and lord of England." Geoffrey's successor, Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester, did not show the broad sympathies and enlightened views of Stephen Langton; but the archbishop was not discouraged, and steadfastly pursued his great object of bettering the government of the kingdom.

In February, 1214, John invaded Poitou; and in June, while at Angers, settled the troublesome question of compensation, by agreeing to pay an annual sum of 12,000 marks to the pope, until all claims were liquidated. The interdict, which Langton, on his own authority, had already relaxed to a considerable extent, was then removed, after being in existence for a period of six years, three months, and fourteen days. In October, John returned to England, unsuccessful and dishonoured. His military measures had brought him neither profit nor renown; and for his complicity in the murder of his nephew, Prince Arthur, he had been deprived of the Duchy of Normandy by his feudal superior, the King of France. At least, he would revenge himself, he thought, on his own subjects; and assembling an army of mercenaries, and of his more immediate vassals, he prepared to punish the northern barons for refusing to join his expedition. But they had previously met at S. Edmundsbury, on the pretence of pilgrimage; and had there sworn, before the martyr-king's shrine, to withdraw their allegiance

from John, and make war upon him, until he restored the laws and liberties of the kingdom, and confirmed them by a sealed charter. John continued to gather his forces, asserting "that he hated, like serpent's venom, the nobles of his kingdom, especially Sayer de Quincy, Robert Fitzwalter, and the archbishop, Stephen Langton." By a promise of freedom of election, he endeavoured to secure the support of the clergy; but the Church remained faithful to what was as much the cause of the people as of the barons. With Rome he was more successful. The pope announced that he was bound to maintain the rights of, and repel all insurrection against, his vassal. He lavished his censures upon the archbishop, his former friend, accusing him of having instigated rebellion, and commanding him to bring about an agreement between the king and his adversaries. Nor did he spare the barons his reproaches: he rebuked them for employing force to extort any concessions from their sovereign, and declared that all their leagues and covenants were null and void. But he was powerless to prevent a collision that events had rendered inevitable.

On the Feast of the Epiphany, 1215, the representatives of the barons' party appeared before the king, and submitted their demands. John with difficulty repressed his anger; but being unprepared to resort to arms, he requested a truce until the first Sunday after Easter. This having been granted, he made haste to foment dissensions among his enemies. He renewed his concession of freedom of election to

the Church, directed that the oath of allegiance and fealty throughout England should be taken to him alone, and required from his tenants-in-chief a renewal of their homage. The barons, still resolute in their purpose, assembled an army at Stamford, and, on the expiration of the truce, marched to Brackley (April 6th). The king, who was at Oxford, was alarmed by this demonstration; and prevailed upon Langton and the Earl of Pembroke to open negotiations with them in his name. The barons presented a long schedule of demands, which Langton himself very probably drew up or inspired; adding that unless these were conceded they should draw the sword. Langton and Pembroke returned to Oxford, and endeavoured to obtain the king's consent, explaining to him the various clauses of the document, until John, in a burst of passion, exclaimed:—"Why do they not ask from me my crown at once? By the feet of God, I will grant no liberties to those whose object it is to make me a slave!"

Appointing Robert Fitzwalter their marshal, the barons proceeded by way of Northampton, Bedford, and Ware, to London, where the citizens received them with a hearty welcome. "The army of God and the Church" was every day swelled by fresh accessions, and the king was so completely deserted that his retinue consisted only of seven knights. Deprived of all power of resistance, he saw that he had to make his choice between submission and deposition from the throne. Accordingly, he in-

formed the barons, through the Earl of Pembroke, that he would grant all they asked, and desired them to name the day and the place where they would meet him.

On the 15th of June, 1215, the two "high contracting parties" met on the field of Runnymede, by the bank of the Thames, between Staines and Windsor. John was attended by the archbishop, seven bishops, and about fourteen earls and barons; but, though they followed in his train, he knew that they were at one in counsel with his enemies, and that he could rely on none but the sub-deacon Pandulf, and Almayn, the Master of the Temple. From the meadow, king and barons, if tradition may be credited, crossed over to a small ait, or islet in the river, known as Magna Charta Island. There he set his seal to the articles drawn up by the barons, and issued the Great Charter of English liberty.*

* Professor Stubbs' remarks on Magna Charta may be used with advantage:—"The Great Charter," he says, "although drawn up in the form of a royal grant, was really a treaty between the king and his subjects; it was framed upon a series of articles drawn up by them, it contained the provisions usual in treaties for securing its execution, and although in express terms it contained only one part of the covenant, it implied in its whole tenor the existence and recognition of the other. The king granted these privileges on the understanding that he was to retain the allegiance of the nation. It is the collective people who really form the contracting party in the great capitulation—the three estates of the realm, not, it is true, arranged in order according to their profession or rank, but not the less certainly combined in one national purpose, and securing by one cause the interests and rights of each other severally and of all together.

" This is the place
Where England's ancient barons, clad in arms,
And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king
(There rendered tame) did challenge and secure
The Charter of thy Freedom. Pass not on
Till thou hast blessed their memory, and find
Those thanks which God appointed, the reward
Of public virtue."

The careful consideration for the rights of the people, as well as the prudent regard for the essential prerogatives of the Crown, which almost every line of the Great Charter exhibits, evidence a breadth of view and an elevation of patriotism far beyond anything that could reasonably be expected from the barons of mediæval England. We are fully justified by the evidence of history in attributing these

. . . The barons maintain and secure the right of the whole people as against themselves as well as against their master. Clause by clause the rights of the commons are provided for as well as the rights of the nobles; the interest of the freeholder is everywhere mingled with that of barons and knights; the stock of the merchant and the wainage of the villein are preserved from undue severity of amercement as well as the settled estate of the earldom or barony. The knight is protected against the compulsory execution of his services, and the horse and cart of the freeman against the irregular requisition even of the sheriff. In every case in which the privilege of the single freeman is not secured by the provision that primarily affects the knight or baron, a supplementary clause is added to define and protect his right; and the whole advantage is obtained for him by the comprehensive article which closes the essential part of the Charter. This proves," adds Professor Stubbs, "if any proof were wanted, that the demands of the barons were no selfish exaction of privilege for themselves, and it proves with scarcely less certainty that the people for whom they acted were on their side."—"Constitutional History of England," i. 530, 531.

features to the sagacity of Archbishop Langton, and the moderation of his coadjutor, William, Earl of Pembroke. To their wise zeal for a legal government, England owed, at a most critical period, the two greatest blessings which patriotic statesmen could desire for their country—the establishment of civil liberty on a permanent foundation, and the preservation of the national independence, which other and less clear-sighted men would have surrendered to the supremacy of France.

John had no sooner attached his signature to the Great Charter than he prepared to violate its provisions. Believing in his sincerity, the barons had disbanded their forces; while he was secretly sending his agents abroad to raise an army of French and Flemish mercenaries. So skilfully did he work out his plans that he was able to enter the field with a formidable force early in October. On the 13th he invested Rochester Castle, which commanded the passage of the Medway, and the road from Dover to the capital. It was stoutly defended by William of Albini; but superior numbers prevailed, and he was compelled to surrender. John would fain have hung him and all his knights on a gibbet; but his confidential adviser, Savarie de Mauleon, interposed a prudent reminder:—"My lord king," he said, "the war is not yet at an end, and it behoves you therefore to think that its fortunes may change. If you hang these men now, the barons, our enemies, should they, in their turn, capture me or other nobles of your army, would

follow your example, and hang *us*! Therefore, do not this deed, or no one will fight on your side.”* During the progress of the civil war initiated by John’s treachery, Langton resolved on visiting Rome, to detach from his side, if possible, the Papal Court, which could have no direct interest in the misgovernment of England, and to expose the intrigues of the royal envoy, the crafty Pandulf. As the archbishop, in his capacity of Cardinal of the Roman Church, had been summoned to attend a council at Rome, John could not forbid, much as he disliked, the journey. Langton was on the point of embarking, with his suite, at Dover, when he received a sudden visit from Pandulf, who had returned from Italy, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Abbot of Reading; and was informed that the pope had entrusted them with certain bulls, annulling Magna Charta, and menacing the barons with excommunication unless they submitted to the king. And the primate was required to give orders that the said bulls should be read to the people every Sunday and holy day in the churches of his province. Langton at once refused. The papal commissioners then pronounced him contumacious, suspended him from his archiepiscopal functions, and prohibited him from celebrating the offices of the Church. The insult, however, could not subdue the resolute spirit of Stephen Langton, and he proceeded on his journey to vindicate his cause and himself in the pope’s presence, while John, rejoicing

* Matthew Paris.

in his deliverance from his most formidable opponent, directed his suspension to be proclaimed throughout the kingdom.

It was soon apparent that the terrors of Rome were lightly regarded by the English barons. They laughed at the papal bulls, and sententiously observed that evil was the case of the man who justified the wicked for the sake of reward. The pope proceeded to fulfil his threat, and launched his excommunication at the leaders of the national party. "We are extremely astonished and justly indignant," scolded the angry pope, "that although our well beloved son in Christ, John, the illustrious king of England, hath given satisfaction beyond what was to be expected, to God and His Church, especially to our brother the archbishop of Canterbury, and to his suffragan bishops, some of these very prelates, showing no due regard, if any, to the mission of the Holy Cross, the mandate of the Apostolic See, and their oath of fealty, have not rendered assistance or shown good will to the king against the disturbers of his kingdom, which by right of dominion, belongs to the Church of Rome, acting as if they were acquainted with, not to say associated in, their conspiracy. Is it in this way they protect those who have taken up the cross? Worse than Saracens, these prelates of the Church of England would drive from his realm a king in whom is our best hope of deliverance for the Holy Land. Therefore, that the insolence of such men may not prevail, not only to the danger of the Church of England, but also to the ruin

of other kingdoms, and, above all, to the subversion of the cause of Christ, we, on behalf of Almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and by the authority of the Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul, and by our own authority, lay the fetters of excommunication on all the disturbers of the king and kingdom of England, as well as on all their abettors and accomplices, and we place their possessions under the ecclesiastical interdict; and we must strictly order the archbishop aforesaid, and his fellow bishops, by virtue of their obedience, to proclaim this our sentence solemnly throughout all England, on any Sunday and feast day, amidst the ringing of bells, and with candles burning, until the said barons shall give satisfaction to the king for his losses, and for the injuries they have inflicted on him, and shall faithfully return to their duty. We also, on our own behalf, enjoin all the vassals of the said king, in remission of their sins, to give advice and render assistance to the king in opposing such transgressors. And if any bishop neglect to fulfil this our injunction, be it known to him that he will be suspended from his episcopal duties, and the obedience of those under him will be withdrawn; because it is right that those who show neglect to their superior should not receive the obedience of their inferiors."

Langton arrived in Rome in November, 1215, to discover that Innocent had forgotten their old friendship, and that the papal *Curia* had been secured by the bribes and promises of the king's

agents. His representations were contemptuously ignored. He was not allowed to defend himself. His sentence of suspension was confirmed; his return to England forbidden. It was useless to protest or complain; and he submitted with his customary composure. Probably he derived no little consolation from an incident which was at once an expression of personal sympathy, and a striking proof of the growing independence of the Anglican Church—the election of his brother Simon by the canons of York to the northern primacy, in opposition to the royal nominee, the Bishop of Worcester.

We have seen how completely the pope had embraced the king's side, and how zealously he had employed his keenest weapons against the national party. It has justly been remarked that he had cursed Magna Charta, cursed the patriots, cursed the English barons, cursed the English bishops, and cursed the city of London. Finally, he had suspended the Archbishop of Canterbury. The evil character of the papacy was seldom more vividly illustrated than in the support thus given to a sensual and sanguinary tyrant. When John, as Dean Milman remarks,* let loose his horde of brutal adventurers from Flanders, Brabant, Poitou, and other countries, like wild beasts, upon his unhappy realm; when he himself carried fire and sword into the north, and his bastard brother, the Earl of Salisbury, ravaged the south; when rapine

* Milman, "History of Latin Christianity," v. 302.

and murder stalked through the whole land; when agriculture was neglected and even markets had wholly ceased, buyers and sellers meeting in churchyards, because they were sanctuaries; when the clergy were treated with the same impartial cruelty as the rest of the people; John was still the ally, the vassal, and under special protection of the "Vicegerent of Christ." Such are the tender mercies of the Church of Rome towards a people struggling for their liberties.

The barons, deprived of the sage advice and firm guidance of Langton, turned for help to Lewis, the son of Philip Augustus of France. The evil results which might have flowed from this appeal to foreign aid were averted, however, by the death of the two great enemies of the national party. Pope Innocent died on the 16th of July, 1216, and King John, on the 19th of October. The accession of Henry III. hushed for a while the din of civil contest. During his minority the affairs of the kingdom were well and wisely administered by the Earl of Pembroke and Hubert de Burgh. Langton, however, did not obtain permission to return to England until 1218. In the May of that year he landed at Dover, to receive an enthusiastic welcome from all classes of people. Soon afterwards he was present at a council held in London, when the young king solemnly confirmed the Charter. The archbishop's signature was attached to the memorable document. On the 17th of May, 1220, Henry was crowned at Winchester by the primate.

Few noteworthy incidents of the archbishop's later career would seem to have been recorded. It was under his direction that the body of "S. Thomas of Canterbury" was translated to its new and sumptuous shrine in Canterbury Cathedral; a shrine blazing with gold and silver and precious stones. The ceremony took place during the night of the 6th of July, as Robert of Gloucester tells us:—

"The king wende ther to Canterbury, and the hire men al so,
To name up * Sein Thomas' body, and in to esrine do; †
Arst he adde ileye an erthe vnsarined vifti zer. ‡
Of Engelande and of France so muche folc ther am ther,
That alle contreye aboute vaneth among it mizte, §
Thermore hii name him vp priueliche bi nizte." ||

The archbishop was present, attended by the Bishop of Salisbury and the prior and monks of Christ Church. The bones and skull were reverently deposited in a coffin of iron; and, on the following morning, the coffin, resting upon the shoulders of England's greatest barons, was carried in solemn procession to the new chapel at the east end of the cathedral. In the following year Langton preached the anniversary sermon in honour of his great predecessor. This sermon has been preserved, but can hardly be recommended to the modern reader. Like most of the "discourses" of that age, it is

* To take up.

† And into the shrine place it.

‡ Before it had lain in earth enshrined for fifty years.

§ That all the country round about could scarcely contain them.

|| Therefore they took him up privately by night.

little more than a tedious theological exercise, replete with scholastic ingenuities.

Of the last hours of the venerable archbishop nothing is known. He died on the 9th of July, 1228, probably at his favourite residence, the archiepiscopal palace of Slindon in Sussex. In Canterbury Cathedral may still be seen the stone coffin which received his remains—the remains of one of England's most enlightened patriots, of one of the Church's noblest and most heroic sons.

Langton was a voluminous writer. He left behind him a poem, "The Hexameron," on the six days of Creation; a canticle on "the Passion of Our Lord;" commentaries on most of the books of the Old Testament; and a "Life of Richard the First." He was, however, a man of action rather than of letters; a man to make history rather than to write it; and will assuredly be remembered as a sagacious statesman rather than as a successful poet.

"As with the stream our voyage we pursue,
The gross materials of this world present
A marvellous study of wild accident;
Uncouth proximities of old and new,
And bold transfigurations, more untrue
(As might be deemed) to disciplined intent
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,
When most fantastic, offers to the view.
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine?
Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia:—crown,
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down
At a proud legate's feet. The spears that lined
Baronial halls the opprobrious insult feel;
And angry ocean roars a vain appeal."

WORDSWORTH, *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, 37.

[One of the principal authorities for the life and times of Archbishop Langton is the chronicler, Matthew Paris ("Historia Major"). Not inferior in value is the narrative of Roger of Hoveden. See also the Annals of Waverley; and the "Itinerary" of King John, edited by Sir T. Duffus Hardy. Foremost among modern authorities must be placed, as regards the political questions of the period, Professor Stubbs's "Constitutional History of England." We have also been much indebted to Dean Hook's "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury" (volume ii.). Compare Dean Milman's "History of Latin Christianity" (volume v.); and Hallam's "History of the Middle Ages." Dr. Lingard's "History of England" may also be consulted.]

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A.D. 1573—1645.

WILLIAM LAUD was the son of an opulent clothier of Reading, where he was born on the 7th of October, 1573. His calumniators endeavoured to represent him as sprung of obscure and even mean parentage; and though, had the charge been true, it was not one of which he need have been ashamed, Laud, on one occasion at least in the day of his prosperity, showed that he was wounded by it. Dr. Heylyn, his biographer, found him once in his garden at Lambeth, with a perturbed countenance. In reply to Heylyn's inquiries the archbishop produced a printed libel, which had been stopped at the press, wherein he was reproached with so base a parentage, as if he had been raked out of a dung-hill; adding withal that, though he had not the good fortune to be born a gentleman, yet he thanked God he had been born of honest parents, who lived in plentiful condition, employed many poor people in their way, and left a good report behind them. Heylyn's rejoinder was well calculated to shame

the primate out of his momentary weakness. He reminded him that Pope Sextus V., "as stout a pope as ever wore the triple crown," was only a poor man's son; but that he was wont familiarly to say, in contempt of the invectives frequently hurled at him, that he was born of an *illustrious* house (*domo natus illustri*), because the sunbeams passing through the rent roof and shattered walls, *illustrated* every nook and corner of the homely cottage in which he first saw the light. Whether comforted by Heylyn's reply, or repentant of his temporary folly, Laud recovered his composure, and his countenance resumed its usual serenity.

Laud, in his childhood, suffered much from illness; but as he grew in years, he increased in physical vigour, and was able to attend the free grammar school of his native town. His master appears to have been a severe disciplinarian, but he detected the abilities of his weakly pupil, and took a pleasure in their development. Believing him destined to a distinguished career, he would say to him, "When you are a little great man, remember Reading School." He may have been encouraged in this conviction by the boy's "strange dreams," which were as full of promise of future greatness as those attributed to Oliver Cromwell.

In July, 1589, Laud was admitted a commoner of S. John's College, Oxford, and in the following year was nominated to a scholarship. After proving himself an assiduous and successful student, he was admitted to a fellowship in 1593. In 1594 he pro-

ceeded to the degree of B.A. A long illness followed, the result, apparently, of overwork; and it was 1598 before he took his degree of M.A. The see of Oxford being vacant, Laud sought ordination in 1600 from Dr. Tring, Bishop of Rochester; and by the same prelate, in the following year, he was ordained priest. His parents had not survived to see him attain to this stage of his career; his father dying in April, 1594, and his mother in November, 1600.

At this period Laud was esteemed by all who knew him "a very forward, confident, and zealous person." This opinion of him was probably based, not so much on his energy and self-reticence, as on the pertinacity with which he held to the doctrines of the Catholic Church as handed down by the Fathers, which were then but little esteemed at Oxford. The views prevalent and popular in the great city of letters were those of the school of Geneva; and Calvin was regarded as a much greater authority than S. Jerome or S. Augustine. The authority of the Church, nay, even its existence as a visible body, and the principle of Apostolical succession, were openly called in question; whereas Laud had constructed his system of divinity upon "the noble foundations of the Fathers, the Councils, and the ecclesiastical historians."

With all the impetuosity of his character Laud chose the earliest opportunity of lifting up his testimony against Puritanism. Throughout life he was as eager for battle as any war-horse, and sniffed from

afar off the coming of conflict. In 1602 he was appointed to read the May lecture; and in the course of his prelections he stoutly maintained, to the great disgust of the heads of the University, "the constant and perpetual visibility of the Church of Christ, derived from the Apostles to the Church of Rome, and continued in that Church, as in others of the East and South, until the Reformation." Among the adversaries whom he provoked by this frank declaration was Dr. George Abbot, Master of University College, Dean of Winchester, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. He was the leader of the Puritan or Calvinistic party in the Church; and this act of defiance, as he was pleased to consider it, was never forgiven by him. Thenceforward Laud was persistently misrepresented by Abbot's partisans as a confederate of Rome and an enemy to the Gospel of Christ. The consequence of Laud's honesty was as disastrous as an honest policy too often is. He was studiously depreciated in every way and on every occasion, and was debarred from that preferment in the Church to which his worth, learning, and ability entitled him, until he was thirty-five years of age.

In May, 1603, Laud was chosen by the University for the office of Proctor; in September the Earl of Devonshire made him his chaplain. He took the degree of B.D. in July, 1604, and again evinced the full courage of his opinions by upholding, in his theological exercise, the necessity of baptism, and the indispensableness of diocesan episcopacy to a

true Church. It is needless to say that he thus afforded his opponents an opportunity of strengthening the belief that he was favourable in heart to the Romish superstition. He gave them, in the following year, a much greater cause of complaint. At the urgent request of his patron the earl, he consented to solemnize a marriage between him and the Lady Penelope Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Essex, who had been divorced from her husband, Lord Rich, on account of a shameful intrigue with the Earl of Devonshire. An advocate of Laud, says Dean Hook, might contend that the legal principles applicable to such a case were then unsettled; but that his act was a violation of the laws of the Church, Laud must have clearly understood. It is useless to attempt to excuse a weakness of which Laud himself repented with many tears. Ever afterwards he observed S. Stephen's Day, the day on which he had been untrue to his own conscience, as an annual fast, and composed for his use the following prayer:—

“Behold Thy servant, O my God, and in the bowels of Thy mercy have compassion on me. Behold, I am become a reproach to Thy Holy Name by serving my ambition, and the ruin of others; which, though I did it by the persuasion of other men, yet my own conscience did check and upbraid me in it. Lord, I beseech Thee, for the mercies of Jesus Christ, enter not into judgment with me Thy servant, but hear His blood, imploring mercies for me. Neither let this marriage prove a divorcing of

my soul from Thy grace and favour. For much more happy had I been if, being mindful of this day, I had suffered martyrdom as did S. Stephen, the first of martyrs, denying that which either my less faithful friends, or less godly friends, had pressed upon me. I promised myself that the darkness would hide me. But that hope soon vanished away. Nor doth the light appear more plainly, than that I have committed that foul offence. Even so, O Lord, it pleased Thee, of Thine infinite mercy, to deject me with this heavy ignominy, that I might learn to seek Thy name. O Lord, how grievous is the remembrance of my sins to this very day, after so many and such reiterated prayers, poured unto Thee from a sorrowful and afflicted spirit. Be merciful unto me. Hearken to the prayers of Thy humble and dejected servant: and raise me up again, O Lord, that I may not die in my sin, but that I may live with Thee hereafter; and, living, evermore rejoice in Thee, through the merits and the mercies of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen."

In 1607 Laud was presented to the Vicarage of Stanford, and in the following year obtained the advowson of North Kilworth. Soon afterwards he proceeded to the degree of Doctor of Divinity without opposition; and, the report of his abilities having reached the Court, he was summoned to preach before the king at Theobalds, on September 17, 1609. He owed this mark of favour to the interposition of Bishop Neile, of Rochester, who had appointed him his

chaplain, and who gave him the living of Cuckstone, in Kent. Laud left Oxford and settled at Cuckstone; but, the neighbourhood proving unhealthy, exchanged his living for that of Norton, which was of inferior value, but enjoyed a better climate.

The promotion of Neile to the see of Lincoln left vacant that of Rochester, until, in December, 1610, it was filled by the appointment of one of Laud's oldest friends, Dr. Buckeridge, President of S. John's. To the vacant presidentship Laud was promoted, though not without much opposition on the part of Archbishop Abbot and Chancellor Ellesmere. His growth in the royal favour was farther shown by his nomination as one of the king's chaplains (November, 1611). For a while his further advancement was checked by the hostile influence of Abbot; but, on the other hand, Bishop Neile was instant and steadfast in his support, and so far succeeded in confirming the king's good intentions towards him that, in November, 1616, he received the Deanery of Gloucester. The preferment brought him small addition to his income, for the deanery was then very poor, "a shell" (as James himself described it) "without a kernel;" but it involved him once more in the throes of controversy. The cathedral had become one of the centres of Puritanism, and its services were shorn of the adjuncts of divine worship sanctioned by the Church of England. Laud began his career as a reformer of ritual with the energy and directness which were characteristic of the man. Supported by the king, he insisted on

the due reparation of the fabric, and on the removal of the Communion Table to the east wall of the choir. This latter measure was so obnoxious to Dr. Jules Smith, Bishop of Gloucester, as inflexible a Calvinist as he was a learned Hebraist, that he vowed, and kept the vow, he would never again enter the church. Encouraged by his example, the Puritans of Gloucester raised a cry of "No popery;" and a clamour ensued which might have daunted a less enthusiastic reformer than the new dean. He persevered, however, in his resolution to maintain the principles of decency and order, and before the end of the year had crushed out opposition. At the same time he succeeded in effecting some much-needed reforms in the administration of his University.

In 1617 James I. paid a visit to Scotland, where a modified Episcopacy had been restored five years previously; his fond object being to bring into closer conformity with the creed, discipline, and ritual of the Church of England those of the Church of his native land. The object was surely not so unreasonable as it has been represented by many writers. James's mistake was in endeavouring to effect it by the interposition of his royal will and authority, instead of leaving it to be accomplished by the gradual action of the Scottish prelates, assisted by the influence which the gradually increasing intercourse with England would hardly have failed to exercise. James was accompanied by Bishops Neile, Montague, and Andrews, with Dean Laud as chaplain. That the dean's sympathies

went with the king is certain; but it does not seem likely that at this time his counsels would have sufficient weight to determine the royal course. James soon found that neither his royal arguments nor expostulations availed with men who had drunk deep of the strong waters of Presbyterianism, and he resorted to a more cogent expedient. He suspended the allowances which he had formerly allowed the Scotch preachers out of the exchequer. Eventually an assembly was held at Perth, which, by a large majority, passed the following five articles (1618), by which it was agreed:—1. That the Holy Communion should be received by the people kneeling; 2. That it might be privately administered in case of sickness; 3. That baptism also might be privately administered in cases of necessity; 4. That the days of the birth, passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour Christ, and of the coming down of the Holy Ghost, should be publicly solemnized; and 5. That children above eight years of age should receive episcopal confirmation.

Laud has been so persistently misrepresented as the author of the "religious troubles" in Scotland, that it may be as well to introduce in this place his own candid and evidently unvarnished account of his relations to the Scottish Church. "Because," he says,* "so much noise hath been made against me, both in the Scottish charge before answered,

* "History of Troubles and Trial," Laud's Works, iii. 426, et seq.

and in this article about popish innovations in that Service-book [the Scottish Prayer-book], and that I laboured the introducing both of it and them: I think it fit, if not necessary, to set down briefly the story of what was done, and what I did, and by what command, all that business. . . . Dr. John Maxwell, the late Bishop of Ross, came to me from his Majesty; it was during the time of a great and dangerous fever, under which I then laboured; it was in the year 1629, in August or September, which, come that time, is thirteen years since. The cause of his coming was to speak with me about a liturgy for Scotland. At his coming I was so extreme ill that I saw him not; and had death (which I then expected daily, as did my friends and physicians also) seized on me, I had not now this heavy time.

“After this, when I was able to sit up, he came to me again, and told me it was his Majesty’s pleasure that I should receive instructions from some bishops of Scotland concerning a liturgy for that Church; and that he was employed from my lord the Archbishop of S. Andrews, and other prelates there, about it. I told him I was clear of opinion, that if his Majesty would have a liturgy settled there, it were best to take the English Liturgy without any variation, that so the same Service-book might be established in all his Majesty’s dominions; which I did then, and do still think, would have been a great happiness to this State and a great honour and safety to religion.

“To this he replied, that he was of a contrary opinion; and that not he only, but the bishops of that kingdom, thought their countrymen would be more better satisfied if a liturgy were framed by their own clergy, than to have the English Liturgy put upon them; yet, he added, it might be according to the form of our English Service-book.

“I answered to this, that if this were the resolution of my brethren the bishops of Scotland, I would not entertain so much as thoughts about it till I might, by God’s blessing, have health and opportunity to wait upon his Majesty, and receive his further directions from himself.

“When I was able to go abroad, I came to his Majesty and represented all that had passed. His Majesty avowed the sending of Dr. Maxwell to me, and the message sent by him; but then inclined to my opinion to have the English service without any alteration to be established there. And in this condition I held that business for two, if not three, years at least. Afterwards the Scotch bishops still pressing his Majesty, that a liturgy framed by themselves, and in some few things different from ours, would relish better with their countrymen, they at last prevailed with his Majesty to have it so, and carried it against me, notwithstanding all I could do or say to the contrary.

“Then his Majesty commanded me to give the bishops of Scotland my best assistance in this way and work. I delayed as much as I could with my obedience; and when nothing would serve but it

must go on, I confess I was then very serious and gave them the best help I could. But whensoever I had any doubt, I did not only acquaint his Majesty with it, but writ down most of the amendments or alterations in his Majesty's presence. And I do verily believe, there is no one thing in that book which may not stand with the conscience of a right good Protestant. Sure I am his Majesty approved them all; and I have his warrant under his royal hand for all that I did about that book. And to the end the book may be extant, and come to the view of the Christian world, and their judgment of it be known, I have caused it to be exactly translated into Latin; and if right be done, it shall be printed with this history.

"This was that which I did concerning the matter and substance of this Service-book. As for the way of introducing it, I was advised by the bishops, both in his Majesty's presence and at other times, both by word and by writing, that they would look carefully to it, and be sure to do nothing about it but what should be agreeable to the laws of that kingdom; and that they should at all times be sure to take the advice of the lords of his Majesty's Council in that kingdom, and govern themselves and their proceedings accordingly; which course if they have not followed, that can in no way reflect upon me, who have, both in this and all things else, been as careful of their laws as any man that is a stranger to them could be. And in a letter of mine after my last coming out of Scotland, there

I wrote to the reverend Archbishop of S. Andrews, September 30, 1633, concerning the liturgy; that, whether that of England or another were resolved on, yet they should proceed circumspectly; 'because his Majesty had no inducement to do anything but that which was according to honour and justice, and the laws of that kingdom;' and a copy of this letter I have yet by me to shew; and for the truth of this averation, I know his Majesty, and my lord Ross himself, will avow it.

"And here I take leave to acquaint the reader, that this was no new conceit of his Majesty, to have a liturgy framed and canons made for the Church of Scotland; for he followed his royal father King James his example and care therein, who took order for both at the Assembly at Perth, A.D. 1618."

This statement, which is confirmed by ample independent evidence, effectually disposes of one of the darkest calumnies levelled at Laud's memory. He has also been accused of having instigated the publication of the "Book of Sports," by which certain pastimes were permitted in public on the Lord's Day. Laud unquestionably held no Sabbatarian views; but he was not in attendance upon, nor consulted by, the king, when the royal declaration against Sabbatarianism was issued.

On being presented in 1617 to the Leicestershire Rectory of Ibstock, Laud resigned the living of Norton. We find him next at Oxford, in search of rest and peace, but not succeeding in finding either. His erection of an organ in the chapel of S. John's

College gave great offence to the Puritans. Exhausted by the troubles which beset him, Laud succumbed to a grievous illness. "I fell suddenly dead," he writes, "for a time, at Wickham, on my return from London." After his recovery, he was installed Prebendary of Westminster (January 22, 1620); a preferment followed by his appointment to the Bishopric of S. David's. He was consecrated on the 18th of November, 1621; and a few months later engaged in a controversial duel with the Jesuit Fisher.

This subtle-minded servant of Loyola had been charged by the Roman see with the task of recovering for the Church of Rome the brilliant favourite of Prince Charles and powerful minister of King James, the Duke (then Marquis) of Buckingham. He began by beguiling from the English communion the favourite's mother; and was preparing to follow up the advantage, when the intrigue came to the knowledge of the king. James I. was much troubled by the lady's defection, and attempted to argue her back into a more wholesome spiritual condition. When his efforts failed, he listened to the advice of the Lord-Keeper, who had already suggested that a public disputation should take place between certain champions of the two Churches, with the full conviction that the warriors of the English Church would triumph, and that the perverted lady would then see the error of her ways! The expedient was curiously simple; but it suited the temper of the times and of the king. In the royal presence, and

with all due solemnity, the trial of argumentative strength took place, the championship of the Church of England, on the third conference, being assumed by Bishop Laud, who proved himself more than a match for his opponent. A "Relation of the Conference" was afterwards published; and it exhibits in a favourable light Laud's learning, moderation, and logical powers. Upon the Countess of Buckingham, however, his efforts made but a transitory impression. He was more fortunate with her son, and the brilliant duke's adhesion to the English Church must be credited to Laud's indefatigable exertions. On the 15th of June, the duke appointed him his chaplain, and next day received at his hands the Holy Sacrament.

The dissolution of Parliament took place at the end of the year, and Laud was then free to undertake a pastoral inspection of his diocese. He found not a few of the churches in a grievously neglected condition, and took care that they were so restored as to admit of the decent performance of divine service; and as no chapel was attached to the episcopal residence (then near Carmarthen), he immediately ordered the erection of a suitable edifice. The want of balance (so to speak)—or, shall we say? the feminine strain—in Laud's character was shown by his steady faith in dreams, and his diary gravely records those with which he was visited as if their prophetic meaning were beyond dispute. He did not fail to dream significantly while busied with the building of his chapel. But, in truth, few events

of his life seem to have transpired without being anticipated by visions of the night. His servants, his friends, his kinsmen constantly figured in them. At one time King James appeared to him, smiling, and with beckoning hand. Or his father approached him, his manner as in the days of old, and told him he would remain with him till he had him away with him. He remarks, as if suddenly conscious of his weakness, "I am not moved with dreams, but I thought fit to remember this." In spite of his disclaimer, he seems to have had, as greater men than he have had, a kind of vague faith in their prophetic significance; but whether such was the case or no, he did not allow them to interfere with his exact and laborious discharge of his episcopal duties.

We do not propose to enter into any examination of the causes of that rupture with the Lord-Keeper Williams (the Bishop of Lincoln) which forms so unlovely an incident in the lives of both these eminent prelates. There is too much reason to fear that it arose out of a sordid competition between them for the favour of the Duke of Buckingham; and it does not seem easy to defend the conduct of either. Nor is it necessary in Laud's case, unless the biographer is possessed with a desire to paint him as a blameless saint, exempt from human weaknesses. It is not hard to admit that Laud, with many virtues, and especially that of a firm adherence to his convictions, had many faults, and, living much in a courtly atmosphere, yielded too

often to courtly influences. He was not a great man; but, on the whole, a man anxious to do the right so far as he could grasp it, and a man endowed with a good deal of practical administrative capacity, who not unnaturally sought for a field in which that capacity would have scope. Between him and Williams was the natural repulsion of two men who stood in each other's way. Moreover, they differed in character and in policy. Williams, it must be conceded, had the larger mind, but Laud the firmer will. Both were ambitious; but Laud's ambition was for the Church, and Williams's for himself. If Williams had succeeded to the primacy, he would probably not have made the 'mistakes that Laud made; but he would have involved himself in intrigues to which Laud would never have condescended.

On the 27th of March, 1625, Charles I. ascended the throne which was to be stained with his blood. His first Parliament assembled on the 18th of June; and Laud, on that occasion, preached before the king and the House of Peers. One passage in his sermon had all the significance of an evil omen. "They, wherever they be," he said, "that would overturn the *Sedes Ecclesiæ*, the seats of ecclesiastical judgment, will not spare, if ever they get the power, to have a pluck at the throne of David. And there is not a man that is for *parity*,—all precious in this Church,—but he is against monarchy in the State. And, certainly, he is half-hearted to his own principles, or he can be but half-hearted to the

throne of David." As the year progressed towards its close, it became evident that Laud, supported by Buckingham, was rapidly rising in the king's estimation, while Williams was as rapidly losing ground. He was appointed to attend his Majesty as Clerk of the Closet, and soon took the position of his confidential adviser on all ecclesiastical matters. Laud's Church policy, if neither very broad nor very exalted, had at least the merit of distinctness and definiteness; it was one which Charles could understand, and with which he was able to sympathize. Nor, while we recognize the fact that it was conceived with an absolute ignorance of the wants and tendencies of the time, must we forget that it held firmly by that great truth of the continuity of the Church, which so many in his own day despised, as too many in the present day ignore it.

It was a proof of the royal favour that Laud was selected to supply the place of Bishop Williams, then Dean of Westminster, at Charles's coronation. As pro-dean it fell to his lot to produce and inspect the regalia, and his enemies afterwards charged it against him that among these ancient appanages of royal state he found an old silver crucifix, which he brought forth with the rest, and placed on the altar. Had he done so, it is obvious that he would but have done his duty, as it was not for him to keep back any portion of the regalia; but no evidence in support of the charge has ever been adduced. He was also accused, at a later period, of having tampered with the king's coronation oath,

with the effect of materially restricting the security of the subject; that is, he interpolated, it was said, in the first clause of the oath, the words "and agreeably to the prerogatives of the kings."

But he was accused of a sin of omission as well as of commission, in that he had cancelled the words *quæ populus elegerit* from the clauses relating to the royal assent to laws proposed by the two Houses. The fact is, that the oath was administered to the king, not by Laud, but by Archbishop Abbot, who would certainly not have consented to any mutilation or modification of so important a formulary, and that the oath was identical in phraseology with that administered to James I.

If Laud's rise in royal favour was due to his intimate connection with the Duke of Buckingham, to the same cause was due his increasing unpopularity. He was regarded as the chief adviser and champion of the man to whom public opinion attributed, and not altogether without justice, the unhappy condition of the kingdom. At the bishop's trial, in 1644, the aid he was supposed to have given to the hated minister was one of the principal articles of his impeachment. He was suspected of a hostile policy towards Parliament, and it was afterwards contended that abundant proof of this hostility was furnished by two speeches which Charles I. delivered—the one, on the 29th of March, to both Peers and Commons; the other, on the 11th of May, to the Peers alone. "Sour and ill passages," it was alleged, appeared in both, and for these Laud

was arraigned as their sole and notorious author. He admitted their authorship, but pleaded that they were drawn up in obedience to the king's commands, and faithfully reproduced, so far as memory would allow, the royal words. Happier had it been for Laud and the Church if he had shared less intimately the king's councils, and confined his energies to the work of ecclesiastical administration. He was fitted neither by genius nor temperament to guide the whirlwind and direct the storm; and his disastrous career is an illustration of the fate that must always befall the man who attempts the conduct of affairs with an ambition in excess of his capacity.

In 1626, on the death of Bishop Lake, Laud was presented to the see of Bath and Wells. It would have been well for his peace, as one of his biographers remarks, had he immediately betaken himself to the care of his diocese, and spent the remainder of his days in the quiet shadow of his cathedral city. But he elected to play the part of an ecclesiastical statesman, as so many of his predecessors had done; not discerning that the conditions were no longer the same, or that the relations of Church and State had undergone a revolution which rendered a race of ecclesiastical statesmen no longer necessary. The country at this time was involved in war; the king, possessed by a dream of absolutism, had dissolved Parliament; yet the treasury was empty. In his need Charles resolved to levy

money by the exercise of his prerogative, and he summoned Laud to his assistance. The bishop was desired to draw up certain instructions, partly political, partly ecclesiastical, for circulation throughout all the parishes in the kingdom, with the view of recommending a cheerful submission to his Majesty's pecuniary demands. The document which Laud composed has been handed down to us, and, like all his State papers, it is inelegantly and cumbrously written. It is too long to be reproduced here, but a brief summary of its contents will show the spirit which pervaded it, and illustrate Laud's conceptions of a statesmanlike policy. Addressed to the two archbishops, it begins with the observation "that the Church and State are so nearly united and knit together, that though they may seem two bodies, yet, indeed, in some relation, they may be accounted but as one, inasmuch as they both are made up of the same men, which are differenced only in relation to spiritual or civil ends. This weakness makes the Church call in the aid of the State to succour and support her whensoever she is pressed beyond her strength. And the same weakness makes the State call in for the service of the Church, both to teach that duty which her members know not, and to exhort them to, and encourage them in, that duty which they know." It then explains, at some length, the dangers hanging over England and the whole of Europe through the vast power and great ambition of the House of Austria; "the replacing of Romish superstition in all the neighbouring parts

of Christendom," if Austria were successful; and the shame and reproach that would then accrue to England as "the betrayer of that religion elsewhere, which it professeth and honoureth at home." It proceeds to state that it was by the advice of both Houses of Parliament that all former treaties had been dissolved, and matters brought to the arbitration of arms. "This, upon their persuasions, and promises of all assistance and supply, we readily undertook and effected, and cannot now be left in that business but with the sin and shame of all men. Sin, because aid and supply for the defence of the kingdom, and the like affairs of State, especially such as are advised and assumed by parliamentary council, are due to the king from his people, by all law, both of God and man; and shame, if they forsake the king, while he pursues their own counsel, just and honourable, and which could not, under God, but have been as successful, if it had been followed and supplied in time, as we desired and laboured for." Laud's instructions go on to deplore the discord which distracts the kingdom; "a breach of unity, which is grown too great and common amongst all sorts of men." And, after commanding the clergy to use all their efforts to suppress division and dissension, they conclude as follows:—"The sword is the thing which we are now to look to, and you must call the people to their prayers again against that enemy, that God will be pleased to send deliverance from this judgment; that, in the same way, He will be pleased

to strengthen the hands of His people; that He will sharpen their sword, but dull and turn the edge of that which is in our enemies' hands; and so, while some fight, others may pray for the blessing. And you are to be careful that you fail not to direct and hearten our beloved people in this and all other necessary services, both of God, His Church, and us; that we may have the comfort of our people's service; the State, safety; the Church, religion; and the people, the enjoying of all such blessings as follow these. And we end with doubling this care upon you, and all under you in their several places."

This document met with a very unfavourable reception from all classes of society; and in the odium attaching to it Laud did not fail to share. By licensing the violent sermons of Sibthorpe and Manwaring, two divines who preached the extremest doctrines of passive obedience, he added to his unpopularity. It is true that, in his defence, he professes to have acted solely as the instrument of a committee of the bishops; but the excuse is worth nothing, as the committee could not have compelled him to any line of action of which he disapproved.

In September, 1626, Laud succeeded Bishop Andrews as dean of the Chapel Royal; in the following April, he was made a privy councillor. He owed both appointments to the patronage of Buckingham. In July, 1628, he was promoted to the see of London.

In the same year Charles found himself compelled to summon a Parliament; and on the occasion of its meeting, Laud preached a sermon to both Houses on the excellence of kings—in other words, on the excellence of complete submission to the royal will and authority. The Commons, however, were in no pliant mood. They were alarmed at the peril which beset the kingdom from popery and prerogative. Their first measure was to move the Peers to join them in an address to the king for the more effectual suppression of the former; and their next, as a safeguard against the latter, to discuss the propositions afterwards embodied in the celebrated “Petition of Right.” Charles endeavoured to evade compliance with the demands of his Parliament; whereupon Sir John Eliot boldly moved the presentation of a Remonstrance to the king on the condition of the realm. In the course of his speech he pointed to Buckingham as the real obstacle to a settlement of the points at issue; and Charles, alarmed at the imminent danger of his favourite minister, resolved on granting the “Petition of Right.” The concession produced much popular rejoicing, but came too late to nullify the Remonstrance, which the king received with significant coldness. Buckingham, shortly afterwards, fell by the dagger of Felton, at Portsmouth; and for a moment the country drew a breath of relief, in the hope that his policy would perish with him. It was soon seen that no such good result could be expected.

The religious quarrel now revived with more than its former intensity. It seemed to an excited people, among whom the old hatred of Rome had been strengthened by the progress of events abroad, that Laud and the High Church party, of whom he was the acknowledged leader, were bent upon the introduction of the ceremonies and doctrines of the Roman Church. They could not understand Laud's desire to retain and conserve what was Catholic in contradistinction to that which was exclusively Roman. Knowing what their forefathers had suffered, and what the continental Protestants were at that moment suffering, we can pardon their indignation while we regret their ignorance. They had good cause to abhor and detest Rome and the superstitions of Rome; and if they ascribed to Rome much which really belonged to the universal Church, their mistake was one that has been repeated in our own day by men who ought to have known better. On the other hand, it is impossible to acquit Laud of precipitancy and unwisdom in his mode of action, which justified the shrewd judgment of James I. "He hath a restless spirit," said James to Buckingham, when the latter urged Laud's advancement to the see of S. Asaph—"he hath a restless spirit, that cannot see when things are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain." This was not the time, nor was he the man, for the accomplishment of so great and critical a reform as he adventurously undertook. A reformer can be successful only when in full sym-

pathy with his age and his contemporaries; and Laud understood neither the wants of the one, nor the tendencies of the other.

The debates on religion which the Commons began were suddenly terminated by the dissolution of Parliament (1629); an act which so affrighted the Puritans, that they eagerly turned their eyes towards the Western world, as offering an asylum where they might worship God in peace. The measures of Laud increased their panic. They could not understand his object, and if they had understood it they would not have applauded it. To them nothing seemed more plain than that he wished to bring England once more under the supremacy of Rome. It is needless to say that Rome had few more steadfast opponents than the calumniated bishop. And here we may quote the opinion of a modern writer by no means favourable to Laud's party or principles: "Cold," he says, "pedantic, ridiculous, superstitious as he was (he notes in his diary the entry of a robin redbreast into his study as a matter of grave moment), William Laud rose out of the mass of Court prelates by his industry, his personal unselfishness, his remarkable capacity for administration. At a later period, when immersed in State business, he found time to acquire so complete a knowledge of commercial affairs that the London merchants themselves owned him a master in matters of trade. But his real influence was derived from the unity of his purpose. He directed all the power of a clear, narrow mind and a dogged will, to the realization

of a single aim. His resolve was to raise the Church of England to what he conceived to be its real position as a branch, though a reformed branch, of the great Catholic Church throughout the whole world; protesting alike against the innovations of Rome and the innovations of Calvin, and basing its doctrines and usages on those of the Christian communion in the centuries which preceded the Council of Nicæa. The first step in the realization of such a theory was the severance of whatever ties had hitherto united the English Church to the Churches of the Continent. . . . As Laud drew further from these, he drew, consciously or unconsciously, nearer to Rome. His theory owned Rome as a true branch of the Church, though severed from that of England by errors and innovations against which Laud vigorously protested. But with the removal of these obstacles reunion would naturally follow, and his dream was that of bridging over the gulf which ever since the Reformation had parted the two Churches. The secret offer of a cardinal's hat* proved Rome's sense that Laud was doing his work for her; while his rejection of it, and his own reiterated protestations, proved equally that he was doing it unconsciously. Union with the great body of Catholicism, indeed, he regarded as a work which only time could bring about, but for which he could prepare the Church of England by raising it to a higher standard of Catholic feeling and Catholic practice.

* In August, 1633. The offer was probably designed to compromise Laud still further with the Protestant party.

The great obstacle in his way was the Puritanism of nine-tenths of the English people, and on Puritanism he made war without mercy."

The accuracy of this view of Laud's aims and conduct may be accepted, with some slight modification, by those of his biographers who are not his professed panegyrists. It was the misfortune of his ecclesiastical policy that, to the eyes of the people, it was necessarily blended with his civil policy; and as he identified the Church with the defence of the royal prerogative and the championship of passive obedience, he forced the nation back upon Puritanism as the only religious system compatible with the maintenance of the liberties of the subject. And in this way an odium fell upon the Church which adhered to her for the next two centuries, and is even yet hardly got rid of. The English people hated Laud, therefore, with a double hatred; he was not only the suspected friend of popery and the enemy of religious freedom, but the defender of the most arbitrary pretensions of the Crown. For the same reasons they hated the Church, of which they regarded him as the representative and leader.

Laud was the friend of Hales, and the patron of Jeremy Taylor; but the spirit of tolerance which animated these two great divines never kindled a spark of life and light in his cold and narrow intellect. He was overmastered by his purpose; and his elevation to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, in 1633, gave him the means of working out that purpose with the full energy of his nature. While gratified

by his promotion, for Laud was not insensible to the promptings of ambition, he saw some of the difficulties in which it would entangle him. Writing to Strafford, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, in reply to his congratulations:—"To speak freely, you may easily promise more than I can perform. For, as for the Church, it is so bound up in the forms of the common law, that it is not possible for me, or for any man, to do that which he would, or is bound to do. They which have gotten so much power, in and over the Church, will not let go their hold. *They* have, indeed, *fangs* with a witness, whatsoever I were once said to have. And for the State, I am for *thorough* [Strafford's dangerous watchword!]. But I see that both thick and thin stays *somebody*, when I conceive it should not. In truth, I have had a heaviness upon me ever since I was nominated to this place; and I can give no account of it, unless it proceed from an apprehension that more is expected from me, than the craziness of the times will give me leave to do."

This "heaviness" did not deter Laud from the "thorough" measures essential to the repression of Puritanism. He began by reforming the Church itself, and for this purpose, early in 1634, undertook a metropolitical visitation of his province. His first care was to secure the sanctity of the Holy Table, which, in many parish churches, was then placed in the middle of the nave, and treated with peculiar irreverence. It often served the churchwardens for a parish table, the school-boys for a desk,

and the carpenters for a working board. In one place, we are told, a dog had run away with the bread set apart for the Holy Communion; and, in many instances, the wine had been brought to the *table* in pint pots and bottles, and so was distributed to the people. In his attempt to enforce greater decency and order in these particulars, Laud encountered the hostility of Bishop Williams. He retorted by making the bishop's diocese the scene of his first visitation, and inhibiting him and his archdeacons from the exercise of their jurisdiction while the visitation lasted. Williams contended that he was exempted from such suspension by papal bulls which his predecessors had obtained; but, on a reference of the dispute to the lords of the Council, it was decided in Laud's favour. The bishop was compelled to temporary submission, but he had his revenge when the visitation was over; giving orders that the Communion Table should be replaced in the middle of the church, with a rail enclosing it, instead of, as Laud desired, at the east end, with a rail before it.

Among other reforms were the restoration of Catholic usage in the administration of the Sacrament, and the due ordering and furnishing of cathedral churches, while he exacted from his clergy a closer attention to their duties. Whatever he did was, not unnaturally, misinterpreted by the political party whom he had so persistently opposed; so that louder than ever rose the outcry against his Romish practices and propensities. The present age, not

blinded by fanatical prejudice, may, however, acknowledge that it was by Laud's perseverance and intelligent zeal that a higher standard of reverence was established in the ceremonies and observances of the Church, and that her sanctuaries were rescued from slovenliness. An impartial judge will find little to censure in his efforts to secure decency and solemnity of Ritual. It is otherwise when we consider his warfare against Puritanism, which was equally impolitic and unjust. By means of the High Commission he endeavoured to extirpate the thing his soul abhorred. He reprimanded or suspended those of his clergy suspected of "Gospel preaching." He suppressed the Puritan lectureships which had been founded in almost every town. He refused to allow the country gentry the privilege of keeping chaplains, because these chaplains too often wore the Geneva cloak and preached the Geneva doctrine. When a living fell vacant, he took care that it should be supplied with a warm advocate of passive obedience, who was at the same time a stern denouncer of Calvinistic dogma. He required communicants to kneel when they received the Sacrament; and silenced or deprived a crowd of Puritan ministers for refusing to read the royal declaration in favour of Sunday recreations from the pulpit.

As is the case with most reformers, and especially with reformers whose courage is in excess of their sagacity, Laud went further than, we imagine, he originally contemplated; and he allowed his clergy to teach some of the tenets generally regarded as

distinctively Romish. He also claimed for the clergy a civil and political position which would have rendered them the most powerful body in the State. He revived the jurisdiction of the bishops' courts; and he obtained for his faithful *adlatus*, Juxon, Bishop of London, the highest civil office in the realm, that of Lord High Treasurer. "No Churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time," he remarks in his diary. "I pray God bless him to carry it so that the Church may have honour, and the State service and content by it. And now, if the Church will not hold themselves, under God I can do no more." In 1636, the triumphant archbishop had the honour of entertaining Charles and Henrietta Maria, on the occasion of their visit to Oxford, at his own college, and in the sumptuous gallery erected at his own expense. The banquet was worthy of the magnificence of a Wolsey; and the masque presented after dinner, under the direction of Inigo Jones, sent away the royal guests "wrapt in measureless content." This was the very apogee of his high and daring course. Already, though he saw them not, or regarded them not, the shadows were gathering on his path; and dimly in the distance loomed the prison, the scaffold, and the headsman's axe.

That his eyes were not yet opened to the full peril of his position is evident, as Mr. Le Bas remarks, from his sanctioning, in the following year, a measure which argued an almost judicial infatuation. A body of Puritan enthusiasts, sick of the tyranny

which Charles had established, proposed to seek the shores of New England in search of that civil and religious freedom which Old England seemed to have driven from her borders. Eight ships had actually been chartered to convey them across the ocean, when an order from the Council inhibited their embarkation. This was followed by another, declaring that no clergyman should be allowed to pass to the foreign plantations, without licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. And thus foolishly was "one great safety-valve" closed up, at a time when the internal pressure was hourly increasing in violence.

The year 1637 was marked by the king's ill-judged attempt to force upon the people of Scotland a new liturgy—to Laud's share in which we have already adverted—and the consequent overthrow of episcopacy. "The tumult in Scotland," writes Laud in his diary, "about the Service-book offered to be brought in, began July 3, 1637, and continued increasing by fits; and has now brought that kingdom in danger. No question but there is a great concurrence between them and the Puritan party in England. A great aim there, to destroy me in the king's opinion." In this same year William Prynne, the author of the rancorous "*Histriomastix*," for which he had already suffered cruel punishment,* was again brought before the Star

* He was condemned to a fine of £5000; to expulsion from the University and degradation from the bar; to have his book burnt before his face by the common hangman; and to imprisonment for life.

Chamber, along with John Bastwick, of Colchester, and Henry Burton, at one time tutor to the sons of Lord Airy, for gross libel. Their language was contemptibly violent, but a wise statesman would have prudently ignored it. Whether it was by the act of Laud that they were summoned before the Star Chamber seems uncertain; but he cannot be exempted from the shame of having concurred in the heavy sentence inflicted on these misguided fanatics. He remarks, in self-defence, that "Perry was hanged, and Udal condemned and died in prison, for less than is contained in Mr. Burton's book." The remark shows that he was not altogether satisfied with his conduct, and felt that an apology was needed for it. But the one he offers is obviously worthless. The world had grown in enlightenment since the days when Perry and Udal suffered; and that they had been barbarously treated was clearly no reason why Prynne and his fellow-victims should be illegally and inhumanly punished. And another expression of Laud's, in a letter to Strafford, reveals the spirit in which he originally acted. He was not content with the sentence; enough had not been done. "What think you of '*thorough*,'" he writes, "when there can be such slips in business of consequence? What say you to it, that Prynne and his fellows should be suffered to talk what they pleased, while they stood in the pillory, and win acclamations from the people?" Lord Clarendon, wiser than Laud, comments on this political blunder with cogent pertinency. That they deserved punish-

ment he agrees, but it should have been punishment proportioned to their offence, and not of such a quality as to elevate those who suffered it to the dignity of martyrs. "When they were all sentenced, and for the execution of that sentence brought out to be punished as common and signal rogues, exposed upon scaffolds to have their ears cut off and their faces and foreheads branded with hot irons (as the poorest and most mechanic malefactors used to be, when they were not able to redeem themselves by any fine for their trespasses, or to satisfy any damages for the scandals they had raised against the good name and reputation of others), men began no more to consider their manners, but the men; and every profession, with anger and indignation enough, thought their education, and degrees, and quality would have secured them from such infamous judgments, and treasured up wrath for the time to come."

The cold vindictiveness which Laud exhibited in this matter he exhibited also in his treatment of Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, who was arraigned before the Star Chamber in July, on various charges, and sentenced to pay a fine of £10,000, to be imprisoned in the Tower during the king's pleasure, and to be suspended from all his offices, preferments, and functions. The feud between Laud and Williams was of long standing; but even Dean Hook owns that the primate, on this occasion, did not display the generosity of spirit which might have been expected.

But against these errors of conduct and judgment, which sprang from the passionate weakness of his temperament, we must put the courageous opposition he maintained to the Romanizing designs of the queen and her courtiers. He did not hesitate at the Council table to inveigh strongly against the frequent resort of papists to Henrietta Maria's Court, and the influences by which it was sought to favour the spread of popery. He particularly denounced the proselytizing acts of Sir Toby Matthews and Mr. Montagu, and by his advice the king expelled them from Court. It was about this time that he gave further proof of his anti-Roman principles by republishing his "Conference with Fisher," where the champions of Protestantism will find weapons ready to their hands. Dering, an enemy of Laud's, is constrained to write: "He hath muzzled the Jesuit, and should strike the papists under the fifth rib when he was dead and gone." It was in this year that he caused the English Liturgy to be translated into Greek, and induced Bishop Hall to compose and publish his "Episcopacy by Divine Right asserted." He also appeared in a character he not unfrequently affected, that of the patron of letters; and we learn that, on the 28th of June, he sent 576 volumes of manuscripts to Oxford, being what he calls "the remainder." Above a hundred of these were Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian. He had previously sent upwards of seven hundred volumes, which had been collected at no little cost.

It is no part of our province to deal with the great events which lend so profound and tragic an interest to the history of the reign of Charles I., except so far as they bear upon the life of Laud. We must pass over the invasion of the Scots; the journey of the king to the north, and the collapse of the so-called Bishops' War; the treaty concluded with the Scots at Ripon; the removal of the negotiations to London; and the outbreak of public opinion provoked by Hampden's resistance to the illegal levying of "Ship-money." This was followed by the revolt of Scotland. In truth, the flames of insurrection had kindled throughout the country from north to south. The London apprentices mobbed Laud at Lambeth, and by their violence compelled the High Commission to break up its sittings at St. Paul's. Strafford was as powerless as Laud to subdue the storm; and the king was driven by his necessities to convene the Peers and Commons at Westminster. The Long Parliament began its famous career (1640).

Its stern and resolute temper was manifested by its uncompromising action. It appointed forty committees to examine the petitions that came up from every part of the country, and to report upon them. In this way it obtained a full knowledge of the sympathies and opinions of the people. Prynne and his fellow "martyrs" were released from prison. Ship-money was declared illegal, and the judgment which had been obtained against Hampden annulled. The civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Privy Council, the Star Chamber, and the High Commis-

sion was swept away. The whole structure of absolute power which Charles and Strafford had so laboriously built up fell to the ground. The impeachment of Strafford on a charge of high treason followed (November 11th). On the 16th of December, the House condemned the canons passed by Convocation as contrary to the king's prerogative, to the fundamental laws of the realm, and the liberty and property of the subject; and, Laud being denounced as their author and contriver, a committee was appointed to examine into his actions, and prepare a charge against him. On the same day the Scotch Commissioners presented to the Lords a set of articles against the aged prelate, in which they accused him of being the "prime mover" of all the pernicious innovations which had recently been attempted in their country. Two days later the Commons debated on the archbishop's conduct; and Sir Harbottle Grimston urged that they should proceed further against him than a bare sequestration. "We are now fallen on that great man," he said. "Look upon him as he is in his highness, and he is the sty of all the pestilential filth that hath infected the state and government of this commonwealth. Look upon him in his dependencies, and he is the man, the only man, that hath raised and advanced all those that, together with himself, have been the authors and causes of all our ruins, miseries, and calamities we now groan under. Who else but he only that hath brought the Earl of Strafford to all his great places and employments?—a fit spirit

and instrument to act and execute his wicked and bloody designs in these kingdoms. . . . Who is it but he only that hath advanced all our popish bishops? I shall name but some of them: Bishop Manwaring, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Bishop of Oxford, and Bishop Wren, the last of all those birds, but one of the most unclean ones." The debate terminated with a vote of the House that the archbishop was a traitor; and an order for his committal was carried up to the House of Lords. He was immediately taken into custody by Maxwell, gentleman-usher of the Black Rod, but allowed to return to Lambeth to fetch the papers necessary for his defence. He attended evening prayers in his new chapel, and afterwards prepared to enter his barge. On leaving his door hundreds of his poor neighbours, who had often tasted of his bounty, surrounded him, and sent up their prayers to Heaven for his safe and speedy return to Lambeth.

He remained about ten weeks in the custody of Maxwell, being obliged to defray his own expenses, at the rate of twenty nobles. But he was gently treated; and his mild and patient deportment seemed to influence the House of Lords considerably in his favour.* His friends thought that he might escape with loss of his archbishopric and banishment from Court. But in the Commons the wrath of his ad-

* Heylyn relates that his demeanour so completely won the good opinion of the gentlewoman of the house, that she reported of him to her companions that, though but a silly fellow to hold converse with a lady, he was the most excellent and pious soul she ever met with.

versaries knew no abatement; and throughout the country he was pursued by the increasing fury of popular calumny. Ballads and libels, equally false and scurrilous, were directed against his person, his office, his character, and his conduct. On the 26th of February, 1641, the articles of impeachment were brought up from the Commons to the Lords; and thereupon a vote was passed, ordering his removal to the Tower. He was summoned to attend the House; and the articles were read to him while standing at the bar. They were fourteen in number, and may be found in full, with Laud's answers to them, in his "History of his Troubles and Trial." Their substance is thus given by Mr. Le Bas:—

1. That he had traitorously endeavoured to subvert the fundamental laws of the realm, and to persuade the king that he might levy money without the consent of Parliament.

2. That he had encouraged sermons and publications tending to the establishment of arbitrary power.

3. That he had interrupted and perverted the course of justice at Westminster Hall.

4. That he had traitorously and corruptly sold justice; and advised the king to sell judicial and other offices.

5. That he had surreptitiously caused a pernicious Book of Canons to be published without lawful authority, and had unlawfully enforced subscription to it.

6. That he had assumed a papal and tyrannical power, both in ecclesiastical and temporal matters.

7. That he had laboured to subvert God's true religion, and to introduce popish superstition and idolatry.

8. That he had usurped the nomination to many ecclesiastical benefices, and had promoted none but persons who were popishly affected, or otherwise unsound in doctrine or corrupt in manners.

9. That he had committed the licensing of books to chaplains notoriously disaffected to the Reformed religion.

10. That he had endeavoured to reconcile the Church of England to the Church of Rome; had held intelligence with Jesuits and the pope; and had permitted a popish hierarchy to be established in this kingdom.

11. That he had silenced many godly ministers; hindered the preaching of God's Word; cherished profaneness and ignorance; and caused many of the king's subjects to forsake the country.

12. That he had endeavoured to raise discord between the Church of England and other Reformed Churches; and had oppressed the Dutch and French congregations in England.

13. That he had laboured to introduce innovations in religion and government into the kingdom of Scotland; and to stir up war between the two countries.

14. That, to preserve himself from being questioned for these traitorous practices, he had laboured to divert the ancient course of parliamentary proceeding, and to incense the king against all Parliaments.

The articles having been read, the archbishop obtained permission to address the House.

“My lords,” he said, “this is a great and a heavy charge, and I must be unworthy to live if it can be made good against me, for it makes me against God in point of religion, against the king in point of allegiance, and against the public in point of safety under the justice and protection of law. And though the king be little, if at all, mentioned, yet I am bold to name him, because I have ever been of opinion that the king and his people are so joined together in one civil and politic body, as that it is not possible for any man to be true to the king as king, that shall be found treacherous to the State established, and work to the subversion of the people; though perhaps every one that is so is not able to see through all the consequences by which one depends upon the other. So my charge, my lords, is exceeding heavy in itself, though I do not as yet altogether feel the weight of it. For ’tis yet, as your lordships see, but in generals, and generals make a great noise but no proof; whereas ’tis proof upon particulars that makes the weight of a charge sit close upon any man. Now, my lords, ’tis an old and a true rule, *errare contingit descendendo*; error doth most often happen, and best appear, when men descend to particulars, and with them alone I shall be charged. I hope my innocence will furnish me with a sufficient answer to any error of mine that shall be thought criminal, or any way worthy the cognizance of this high and honourable court. As

for human frailties, as I cannot acquit myself of them, so I presume your lordships will be honourable judges of them, since in the transaction of so many businesses as passed my hands, men far abler than ever I can be have been subject to them, and perhaps to so many and as great. But for corruption in the least degree (I humbly praise God for it) I fear no accuser that will speak truth."

The charge that most deeply wounded him was his alleged falseness to his Church. That he, the defender of the Church of England against Rome, the advocate of its doctrines, the champion of its catholicity, should be accused of favouring the Romish superstition, "troubled him exceedingly." "I confess, my lords," he exclaimed, "if I should forget myself and fall into passion upon it, I should but be in that case S. Jerome confessed he was in when he knew not how to be patient when falsehood in religion was charged against him."

No impartial student of history will contend that Laud was guilty of treason. The articles brought against him were either wholly untrue or heavily exaggerated. All that can justly be said is, that he encouraged the absolutist tendencies of the king, that he was ignorant of the temper of his age, that he had no knowledge of men or manners, and that he pursued his objects with an imprudent inflexibility of will. His political sagacity was inferior to his administrative ability, and his frigid nature did not easily unbend before the influence of the popular sympathies. In peaceful times he

might have ruled the Church successfully; and it was his misfortune, rather than his fault, that he was called upon to steer the ship when the waters were raging and the winds blowing, and the channel was thick with rocks and sandbanks.

On the 1st of March Laud was transferred to the Tower, where he lay, with the shadow of death upon him, for several months. He had a sad forewarning of his own fate in the trial and execution of his friend, the Earl of Strafford. As the great champion of absolutism passed on his way to the scaffold, the archbishop appeared at the window of his lodgings to bid him a last farewell. The earl, bowing himself to the ground, exclaimed, "My lord, your prayers and your blessing." Laud lifted up his hands, uttered his parting benediction, and then overcome, not by weakness of spirit, but by anguish of mind, fell back in a swoon. Strafford went on his way to death, with the words—"Farewell, my lord! May God protect your innocence!"*

* Laud, in his diary, remarks: "Thus ended the wisest, the stoutest, and in every way the ablest subject that this nation hath had these many years. The only imperfections that he had, that were known to me, were his want of bodily health, and a carelessness, or rather roughness, not to oblige any; and his mishaps in this last action were that he groaned under the public envy of the nobles, served a mild and a gracious prince, who knew how to be or to be made great, and trusted false, perfidious, and cowardly men in the northern employment, though he had many doubts put to him about it. This day was after called by divers, 'Homicidium comitis Straffordiae,' the day of the murder of Strafford; because when malice itself could find no law to put him to death, they made a law of purpose for it. God forgive all, and be merciful!"

During his imprisonment Laud was called upon to pay enormous fines to Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick; and out-of-doors the clamour against him continued to prevail. In June he resigned his Chancellorship of Oxford University. In October, by an order of the House of Lords, obtained at the instigation of Williams, who had been raised to the Archbishopric of York, his primatial jurisdiction and patronage were sequestrated. For some months afterwards Laud was left at peace. The activity of his foes revived on the 1st of May, 1643, when a motion was made in the House of Commons that, without trial or hearing, he should be transported to the colony of New England. The motion was rejected; but fresh persecutions were heaped upon him. His papers were searched and seized; his goods were sold for a third part of their value; his estates were confiscated, and he was reduced to such poverty that he could scarcely supply himself with the necessaries of life. At length, it was resolved to offer him up as a sacrifice to the animosities of the Scots; and, on the 23rd of October, ten new articles of impeachment were laid against him. He was charged—(1) with causing the dissolution of the Parliament held in the third and fourth years of the king; (2) with labouring to advance the authority of the Church, and the royal prerogative, above the law; (3) with procuring a stop to his Majesty's writs of prohibition; (4) with causing execution of judgment to be stayed, in favour of a clergyman charged with non-residence;

(5) with imprisoning Sir John Corbet, for causing the Petition of Right to be read at the quarter sessions; (6) with suppressing the corporation of feoffees for buying impropriations; (7) with harbouring several popish priests; (8) with averring that the Church could never be brought to conformity without a severer blow than had yet been struck; (9) with introducing an unlawful oath into the Canons; and (10) with recommending extraordinary ways of supply, if the Parliament should prove "peevish." Whitelock was ordered to conduct the evidence; but, while a student at Oxford, he had been treated with much kindness by the archbishop, and he refused the offer. It was then given to Laud's inveterate enemy, William Prynne.

Deprived of his papers, and without funds to retain counsel, Laud prepared for his defence, trusting in the honour and justice of the Lords. In this, too, he was disappointed. "It did trouble me," he complains, "to see so few Lords in that great House. For, at the greatest pressure that was, any day of my hearing, there were not above fourteen; and, usually, not above eleven or twelve. Of these, one-third, each day, took or had occasion to depart before the charge of the day was half given. I never had, any one day, the same Lords all the morning. Some leading Lords were scarcely present at my charge four days of all my long trial, or three at my defence. And, which is worst, no one Lord was present at my whole trial, but the Lord Gray of Wark, the Speaker."

The trial began on March 12, 1644. It lasted for five months, and Laud was heard twenty days in his own defence. To dwell upon its details would be neither interesting nor profitable; especially as most men have determined that, whatever might have been Laud's errors, he had done nothing which justified the treatment he received at the hands of his enemies. Throughout the proceedings he conducted himself with much mild forbearance and gentle courage. In truth, in no other action of his life did he behave with more serenity; and he reached a height of moral elevation which claims the admiration of his severest judges. In his arguments with his persecutors he was always calm, manly, and self-reliant. He was never surprised, never at a loss. Thus, to the charge that he had endeavoured to reconcile the Churches of England and Rome, he retorted: "I have converted several from popery; I have taken an oath against it; I have written a book against it; I have held a controversy against it; I have been twice offered a cardinal's hat, and refused it; I have been twice in danger of my life from a popish plot; I have endeavoured to reconcile the Lutherans and Calvinists, and therefore I have endeavoured to introduce popery!" Even Prynne is forced into something like an eulogy. "To give him his due," he says of the archbishop, "he made as full, as gallant, and as pithy a defence of so bad a cause, and spake so much for himself, as it was possible for the wit of man to invent, and that with

so much art, sophistry, vivacity, oratory, audacity, and confidence, without the least blush or acknowledgement of guilt in anything, as argued him rather obstinate than innocent, impudent than penitent, a far better orator and sophister than Protestant or Christian; yea, a truer son of the Church of Rome, than of the Church of England!"

On the 11th of October his counsel were heard at the bar of the Lords, on two points: whether his imputed offences amounted to treason, and whether there were sufficient legal certainty and particularity in the articles of impeachment. But before the Lords could give their decision, the Commons interfered, and, on the 1st of November, summoned the archbishop to appear before them, as if he had been already degraded from his dignity as a Peer of Parliament. He was then informed by the Speaker that the ordinance for his attainder was actually drawn up, but would be suspended until he should hear and answer a summary of the charge. On the 11th of November he delivered his last defence. The conclusion was as follows:—

"Mr. Speaker, I am very aged, considering the turmoils of my life, and I daily find in my life more decays than I make show of; and the period of my life, in the course of nature, cannot be far off. It cannot but be a great grief unto me to stand at these years thus charged before you; yet give me leave to say thus much without offence: Whatsoever errors or faults I may have committed by the way in any my proceedings, through human

infirmity (as who is he that hath not offended, and broken some statute laws too, by ignorance, or misapprehension, or forgetfulness, at some sudden time of action?), yet if God bless me with so much memory, I will die with these words in my mouth: that I never intended, much less endeavoured, the subversion of the laws of the kingdom; nor the bringing in of popish superstition upon the true Protestant religion established by law in this kingdom. . . . The sum of all is this: upon an impeachment arising from this House, I have pleaded not guilty. Thereupon issue hath been joined, and evidence given in upon oath. And now I must humbly leave it to you, your wisdom and justice, whether it shall be thought fit and just and honourable to judge me here only upon a report, or a hearsay, and that not upon oath."

On the 13th the House, without hearing the archbishop's counsel, voted him guilty of high treason; and, on the 17th of December, the Lords came to a similar vote. The attainder was ratified on the 4th of January, 1645, and the 10th of January appointed for the archbishop's execution. The king sent him secretly from Oxford a full pardon, signed and sealed with the Great Seal of England, but the document was worthless. The only favour the aged prelate could obtain was that he should be beheaded, instead of dying on the gibbet. Neither his years, nor his many virtues, nor his sacred office could extort further concession from the stern vengeance of his enemies.

On the morning of the 10th, the fatal day, Laud rose early, and spent some time at his devotions. With a firm step and a cheerful countenance he walked to the scaffold, making his way as best he could through the throng of people that encumbered it. The platform supporting the headsman's block was so loosely put together, that through the crevices between the boards could be seen a number of spectators standing underneath. Laud asked that they might be removed, or dust brought to fill up the chinks, "lest," said he, "my innocent blood should fall on the heads of the people." It was observed that the natural floridness of his complexion had not been impaired by four years of imprisonment and affliction. Being permitted to address the multitude, he read a paper of considerable length, which he had evidently drawn up with much care. He expressed his readiness to die; declared that, like the three faithful ones in the fiery furnace, he would bow down before no image set up by the people, whose blindness he prayed God to enlighten; reminded them that he was not only the first archbishop, but the first man, in England, who had died by "an ordinance" of Parliament; asserted the king's faithfulness to the Protestant cause; and affirmed that for himself, as he had lived in the Church of England, so in that Church he would die. "I am accused," he added, "of high treason; a crime which my soul abhors. I am charged with an endeavour to subvert the laws, and to overthrow the Protestant religion. In vain I protested my

innocence of these crimes. The protestations of prisoners, it was said, could never be received at the bar of justice. I can bring no witness of my heart; I now, therefore, make my protest, in the presence of God and His holy angels, that I never did attempt the subversion either of religion or of law. I, further, have been maligned, as an enemy to Parliaments. I know their uses too well to be their enemy. But I likewise know that Parliaments have been sometimes guilty of misgovernment and abuse; and that no corruption is so bad as the corruption of that which, in itself, is excellent. From the power of Parliaments there is no appeal. If, therefore, they should be guilty of oppression, the subject is left without any remedy. But I have done; I forgive all the world; all and every of those bitter enemies which have persecuted me. And I humbly desire to be forgiven—of God first; and then, of every man, whether I have offended him or not: if he do but conceive that I have, Lord, do Thou forgive me, and I do beg forgiveness of him. And so, I heartily bid you join in prayer with me.”

Then, falling on his knees, he uttered the following beautiful prayer:—

“O eternal God and merciful Father, look down upon me in mercy; in the riches and fulness of all Thy mercies, look down upon me: but not till Thou hast nailed my sins to the cross of Christ, not till Thou hast bathed me in the blood of Christ, not till I have hid myself in the wounds of Christ, that so

the punishment due unto my sins may pass over me. And since Thou art pleased to try me to the utmost, I humbly beseech Thee, give me now, in this great instant, full patience, proportionable comfort, and a heart ready to die for Thine honour, the king's happiness, and the Church's preservation. And my zeal to this (far from arrogantly be it spoken) is all the sin (human frailty excepted, and all the incidents thereunto), which is yet known to me in this particular, for which I now come to suffer: I say, in this particular of treason. But otherwise my sins are many and great: Lord, pardon them all; and those especially (whatever they are) which have drawn down this present judgment upon me! And when Thou hast given me strength to bear it, do with me as seems best in Thine own eyes; and carry me through death, that I may look upon it, in what visage soever it shall appear to me. Amen. And that there may be a stop of this issue of blood in this more than miserable kingdom (I shall desire that I may pray for the people too, as well as for myself), O Lord, I beseech Thee, give grace of repentance to all blood-thirsty people. But if they will not repent, O Lord, confound all their devices, defeat and frustrate all their designs and endeavours, which are or shall be contrary to the glory of Thy great name, the truth and sincerity of religion, the establishment of the king and his posterity after him in their just rights and privileges, the honour and conservation of Parliaments in their just power, the preservation of this poor Church

in her truth, peace, and patrimony, and the settlement of this distracted and distressed people under their ancient laws and in their native liberty. And when Thou hast done all this, in mercy to them, O Lord, fill their hearts with thankfulness, and with religious, dutiful obedience to Thee and Thy commandments all their days. Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen. And receive my soul unto Thy bosom. Amen."

After concluding this prayer, and handing the paper to his chaplain, Mr. Sterne, he advanced towards the block; but, before he could prepare himself, was compelled to listen to some unseemly questions from one Sir John Clotworthy, an Irish Presbyterian. Turning to the executioner, he put some money into his hand, saying, "Honest friend, God forgive thee, as I do. Do thine office upon me with mercy." Sinking again upon his knees, he ejaculated, "I am coming, O Lord, as quickly as I can. I know I must pass through death before I can come to see Thee. But it is only the mere shadow of death; a little darkness upon nature. Thou, by Thy merits, hast broken through the jaws of death. The Lord receive my soul, and have mercy upon me, and bless this kingdom with peace and plenty, and with brotherly love and charity, that there may not be this effusion of Christian blood among them: for Jesus Christ's sake, if it be Thy will." Having laid his head upon the block, he gave a few moments to silent prayer, and then, stretching out his hand, exclaimed, "Lord, receive

my soul." It was the signal on which he had agreed with the executioner. The axe fell, and at one blow severed the head from the body, terminating the troubled career of Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. May we not say, with Heylyn, that he died "very opportunely, in regard of himself," before he saw "those horrible confusions" which afterwards convulsed his beloved Church—"the dissipation of the clergy, the most calamitous death of his gracious sovereign, and the extermination threatened to the royal family? The opportunity of a quiet and untroubled death was reckoned for a great felicity in the noble Agricola; who could not, save in the course of a long life, have felt the hundredth part of those griefs and sorrows, which would have pierced the soul of this pious prelate had not God gathered him to his fathers in so good an hour."

The archbishop's body was interred in the church of All Hallows, Barking, near the Tower; but, after the Revolution (in July, 1663), was transferred to the chapel of S. John's College, Oxford, where it lies beneath the altar.

"Prejudged by foes determined not to spare,
An old weak man for vengeance thrown aside,
Laud, 'in the painful art of dying' tried
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare,
Whose heart still flutters, though his wings forbear
To stir in useless struggle), hath relied
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,
And in his prison breathes celestial air.
Why tarries then thy chariot? Wherefore stay,

O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,
Which thou prepar'st, full often to convey
(What time a state with madding faction reels)
The saint or patriot to the world that heals
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

WORDSWORTH, *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*.

[The authorities who treat of Laud and his period are "legion." But, in support of the statements made in the preceding sketch, it may be sufficient to refer the reader to Laud's own "History of his Troubles and Trial" (in the edition of his works included in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology); Wilson, "Life and Reign of King James;" Hacket, "Life of Bishop Williams;" Heylyn, "Cyprianus Anglicus;" Clarendon, "History of the Great Rebellion;" C. W. Le Bas, "Life of Archbishop Laud;" S. R. Gardiner, "Personal Government of Charles I.;" J. H. Burton, "History of Scotland;" Dr. Grub, "Ecclesiastical History of Scotland;" Dean Hook, "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vi. New Series; the "State Papers" for the reign of Charles I., published by the Master of the Rolls; Guizot, "History of the English Revolution;" Wordsworth, "Ecclesiastical Biography;" and Dr. Mozley, "Historical and Critical Essays," art. Laud.]

BOOK II.
POETS AND DIVINES.



GEORGE HERBERT.
JEREMY TAYLOR.



GEORGE HERBERT.

A.D. 1593—1633.

IT has been the fortune of the Church of England to add many noble contributions to the poetic literature of the nation; and foremost among these, for purity of tone, depth of devotional feeling, and true lyrical grace, must be ranked the poems of George Herbert. He was in all things, at all places, and at all times, a singer. Song came naturally to him as his vehicle of expression. His prayers, his aspirations, his sympathies, his thoughts, clothed themselves spontaneously in verse. Such a statement may appear paradoxical to the reader who remembers his quaint metrical devices and fanciful conceits; but these were truly a part of Herbert's self, and were not assumed or invented for the occasion. He lived in an atmosphere of poetry; or, rather, poetry was his "household bread," the daily sustenance of his being. "If I begin," says, Macdonald, "with that which first in the nature of things ought to be demanded of a poet, namely, Truth, Revelation, George Herbert offers us measure pressed down and running over. But let me speak

first," he continues, "of that which first in time or order of appearance we demand of a poet, namely, music. For inasmuch as verse is for the ear, not for the eye, we demand a good hearing first. Let no one undervalue it. The heart of poetry is indeed truth, but its garments are music, and the garments come first in the process of revelation. The music of a poem is its meaning in sound as distinguished from word—its meaning in solution, as it were, uncrystallized by articulation. The music goes before the fuller revelation, preparing its way. The sound of a verse is the harbinger of the truth contained therein. If it be a right poem, this will be the truth. Herein Herbert excels. It will be found impossible to separate the music of his words from the music of the thought which takes shape in their sound."

It is the fashion to dwell adversely on his far-fetched images, his quips and cranks, his oddities of mechanical contrivance; and even his admirers are prone to defend them on the ground that they belonged to the age, and were impressed upon him by the example of his mother's friend, Dr. Donne. No doubt he owed something, as almost every poet does, to the spirit of the time; but it seems to us that these characteristics are essentially Herbert's own, part and parcel of himself, without which he would, so to speak, cease to be Herbert. They are the notes of his style, the modes of his music. You might as well expect a Titian to paint like a Correggio, as Herbert to sing like

Pope or Tennyson. He goes dressed in singing robes of his own devising, which are suitable to him, and adorn him as they would no other. "Quaint?" Perhaps so; but there is the same "quaintness" about his thought, his sentiment, about himself. We will not say that his "freaks" are always to our liking. The ear is so accustomed now to smoothness and continuity of melody, and regularity of pace, that it has lost its relish for the wayward or daring measures of the elder poets; but we contend that they are natural to Herbert, just as a certain pomp and majesty of verse are natural to Milton. We contend that he wears no other man's clothes, that he is not a slavish imitator of Donne, or, indeed, a pupil in Donne's school. We contend, moreover, that he was a musician of the first quality, and graceful and gracious in the exercise of his art.

Let us take as a specimen of his music some stanzas from his poem called "Home"—

"Come, Lord, my head doth bend, my heart is sick,
While thou dost ever, ever stay;
Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick,
My spirit gaspeth night and day:
O, shew Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee!

"How canst Thou stay, considering the grace
The blood did make which Thou didst waste?
When I beheld it trickling down Thy face,
I never saw such thing make haste:
O, show Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee! . . .

" What is this weary world, this meat and drink
That chains us by the teeth so fast ?
What is this womankind, which I can wink
Into a blackness and distaste ?
O, show Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee ! . . .

" Nothing but drought and dearth, but bush and brake,
Which way soe'er I look, I see ;
Some may dream merrily, but when they wake
They dress themselves and come to Thee :
O, shew Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee !

" We talk of harvests—there are no such things
But when we have our corn and hay ;
There is no fruitful year but that which brings
The last and lov'd, though dreadful day :
O, show Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee ! ;

" What have I left, that I should stay and groan ?
The most of me to heav'n is fled ;
My thoughts and joys are all packt up and gone,
And for their old acquaintance plead :
O, shew Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee !

" Come, dearest Lord, pass not this holy season,
My flesh and bones and joints do pray ;
And e'en my verse, when by the rhyme and reason
The word is ' Stay,' says ever ' Come : '
O, show Thyself to me,
Or take me up to Thee ! "

The reader will observe the peculiar effect produced in the last stanza by the sudden omission of the rhyme. It may be called "a trick," but to us it seems a legitimate effort to obtain an emphatic

recognition of the intention of the poem, and no more a trick than is a suspended chord or a sudden accidental in a piece of music.

What can be more elegantly fanciful than the following? It is a poem entitled "Aaron:"

"Holiness on the head;
Light and perfections on the breast;
Harmonious bells below, raising the dead,
To lead them unto life and rest—
Thus are true Aarons drest.

"Profaneness in my head;
Defects and darkness in my breast;
A noise of passions ringing me for dead
Unto a place where is no rest—
Poor priest, thus am I drest!

"Only another head
I have, another heart and breast,
Another music, making live, not dead,
Without whom I could have no rest—
In Him I am well drest.

"Christ is my only head,
My alone only heart and breast,
My only music, striking me even dead,
That to the old man I may rest,
And be in Him new drest.

"So, holy in my head,
Perfect and light in my dear breast,
My doctrine turned by Christ, who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest—
Come, people: Aaron's drest."

What could be more exquisite than this? Every line is perfect, every word well chosen, and fitted into its place: sound and sense go aptly together.

A conspicuous feature of George Herbert's poetry is its profound sympathy with nature. He gathered much of his inspiration from the Temple, it is true, and delighted to make use of its symbols and hallowed ceremonies; but he gathered more from that other temple, God's beautiful world. Images came to him unbidden from the valleys and the hills, from the tender grasses and the choice blossoms, from the shifting clouds and the noiseless spheres of the stars, from the ringing woods and the glancing sunbeam. The song of the birds constantly echoes in his verse. He has an eye for the radiance of the rainbow and the lurid splendour of the lightning. He found "a heaven in a wild flower;" his garden was to him a visible presentment of paradise, and on behalf of his buds and blooms he could offer up a petition to the falling rain:—

"Rain, do not hurt my flowers, but gently spend
Your honey-drops; press not to smell them here;
When they are ripe their odour will ascend,
And at your lodging with their thanks appear."

His keen sensibility is apparent in such a line as—

"I once more smell the dew and rain;"

which in its vividness reminds us of Keats's exclamation, that he could feel the daisies growing over him. There is no affectation in this love of nature. It does not indulge in elaborate panegyrics, or passages of studied description, in which natural objects are catalogued with an

auctioneer's minuteness ; but it is ever present, and breathes throughout Herbert's poetry like a subtle fragrance.

More particularly, however, is Herbert the poet of the Church. He never wearies of pouring out his deep love and adoration. He reverences every emblem, every nook and corner of the sanctuary, every external grace, every rite, form, and observance connected with it or related to it. It is the loadstone of his thoughts, the well-spring of his imagination, the living fire that kindles his heart and mind. He loved it for what it was and for what it symbolized ; and upon its symbols he threw a new and wondrous light of poetry and devotion. He consecrated to it and its Founder all that he had and could ; his genius, and the expression of it. Thus, he exclaims :—

“ My God, a verse is not a crown,
No point of honour or gay suit,
No hawk, or banquet, or renown,
Nor a good sword, nor yet a lute.

“ It cannot vault, or dance, or play,
It never was in France or Spain,
Nor can it entertain the day
With a great stake or domain.

“ It is no office, art, or news,
Nor the Exchange, or busy hall ;
But it is that which, while I use,
I am with Thee : and ‘ Most take All.’ ”

In the like spirit he kneels humbly at the altar-step, and soothes himself by building up his verse

in such a form as to remind him always of the Holy Table.

A broken Altar, Lord, Thy servant rears,
Made of a heart, and cemented with tears,

Whose parts are as Thy hand did frame ;
No workman's tool hath touch'd the same.

A heart alone
Is such a stone
As nothing but
Thy power doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise Thy name :

That, if I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise Thee may not cease.

O ! let Thy blessèd sacrifice be mine,
And sanctify this Altar to be Thine !

We must pass on to notice his power of profound and original thought. Each subject that he takes up he exhausts, presenting it in a variety of new

lights, striking out from it an abundance of happy suggestions and illustrations; and in all this borrowing from no other writer, but trusting wholly to his own resources. His faculty of condensation is remarkable. He packs up in a line what less affluent poets would spread over a diffuse page. His stanzas are so many caskets of precious things, each being filled to the very brim. In all his poems this compactness is very striking, but nowhere is it more obvious than in the following—

- “Prayer, the Church’s banquet, angels’ age,
God’s breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heaven and earth ;
- “Engine against the Almighty, sinner’s tower,
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
The six days’ world transposing in an hour,
A kind of tune, which all things hear and fear ;
- “Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss,
Exalted manna, gladness of the best,
Heaven in ordinary, man well drest,
The milky way, the bird of Paradise,
- “Church bells beyond the stars heard, the soul’s blood,
The land of spices, something understood.”

There is not one of these fourteen lines which does not deserve patient study.

“The Temple” is the best known of George Herbert’s works, and we may reasonably doubt whether in true poetic power any of his contemporaries have attained to the height which he reaches in the poem on “Man.” A critic has justly said of

it: "The wisdom, the real new insight, the revelation, so to speak, expressed in this striking production are so great, that the language draws no part of the student's attention; he only considers its mighty burden of remote truth, and wonders how it has been brought so near." Another critic pronounces it "Herbert's masterpiece." "The most philosophic," he says, "as well as the most comprehensive of his writings, it stands by itself, and has enlisted the admiration even of those furthest removed from him in creed, and cast, and time. Embodying his recognition of the mysterious relationship of the chief of created beings to his Creator and to the universe, it seems to anticipate centuries of discovery. The faculty which can range from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven, discerns the hidden links by which the world is woven together, and poetry prophesies what science proves." And a third critic observes that, "Herbert at first saw, or at least, first expressed in poetry, the central position of man to the universe—the fact that all its various lines find a focus in him—that he is a microcosm to the All, and that every part of man is, in its turn, a little microcosm of him."

We venture to quote the whole of this fine poem:—

"My God, I heard this day
That none doth build a stately habitation
But he that means to dwell therein.
What house more stately hath there been
Or can be, than is Man? to whose creation
All things are in decay.

" For Man is ev'rything,
'And more : he is a tree, yet bears more fruit ;
A beast, yet is, or should be, more :
Reason and speech we only bring ;
Parrots may thank us, if they are not mute,
They go upon the score.*

" Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And all to all the world besides ;
Each part may call the farthest brother,
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.

" Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey ;
His eyes dismount the highest star ;
He is in little all the sphere ;
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Find their acquaintance there.

" For us the winds do blow,
Th' earth resteth, heav'n moveth, fountains flow !
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure :
The whole is either our cupboard of food
Or cabinet of pleasure.

" The stars haste us to bed,
Night draws the curtain, which the sun withdraws :
Music and light attend our head,
All things unto our flesh are kind
In their descent and being ; to our mind
In their ascent and cause.

" Each thing is full of duty :
Waters united are our navigation ;
Distinguish'd, our habitation ;
Below, our drink ; above our meat ;
Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beauty ?
Then how are all things neat ?

* To go upon the score, i.e. to score up, to borrow.

“ More servants wait on man
 Than he'll take notice of : in ev'ry path
 He treads down that which doth befriend him *
 When sickness makes him pale and wan :
 Oh, mighty love ! Man is one world, and hath
 Another to attend him.

“ Since then, my God, Thou hast
 So brave a palace built, O dwell in it,
 That it may dwell with Thee at last !
 Till then afford us so much wit
 That, as the world seeks us, we may seek Thee,
 And both Thy servants be.”

We may now collect a few witnesses to the consolation derivable by the churchman from the calm and beautiful spirituality of Herbert's poems. Thus Richard Baxter says :—“ Next the Scripture poems, there are none so savoury to me as Mr. George Herbert's. I know that Cowley and others far excel Herbert in wit and accurate composure [surely, a mistaken judgment !] ; but as Seneca takes with me above all his contemporaries, because he speaketh things by words feelingly and seriously, like a man that is past jest, so Herbert speaks to God like a man that really believeth in God, and whose business in the world is most with God—*heart-work and heaven-work make up his book.*” Henry Vaughan, a poet of no mean excellence, attributes to Herbert a peculiar influence upon his own genius. “ The first that with any effectual success,” he says, “ attempted a diversion of this foul and overflowing stream [of erotic verse], was the blessed man, Mr. George Herbert,

* The herbs.

whose holy life and verse gained many converts, of whom I am the least, and gave the first check to a most flourishing and admired wit of his time. After him followed diverse, *sed non passibus æquis*—they had more of fashion than force. And the reason of their so vast distance from him, besides different spirits and qualifications (for his measure was eminent), I suspect to be, because they aimed more at verse than perfection." Sir Thomas Herbert names his kinsman's poems as one of the favourite companions of Charles I., during his captivity at Carisbrook. Cowper, in one of his accesses of mental depression and spiritual darkness, when he had lost all relish for the studies to which he had been previously attached, accidentally met with Herbert's poems; and, "Gothic and uncouth as they were," yet found in them "a strain of piety" which he could not but admire. "This," he says, "was the only author I had any delight in reading." As might be expected, he was deeply read and loved by Coleridge, who remarks, by the way, that the reader, to understand him thoroughly and sympathize with him fully, must be an affectionate and dutiful child of the Church, and from habit, conviction, and a constitutional ceremoniousness in piety as well as in manners, find its forms and ordinances aids to religion, not sources of morality; for "religion is the element in which he lives, and the region in which he moves." Passing over Southey's cordial estimate of his merits and characteristics, we come to a writer in the *Christian*

Remembrancer, who says: "To compare Herbert with the colossal genius of Milton would be preposterous. He is more nearly on a par with Keble and Cowper [surely above the former, if below the latter]. If he wants their polished and musical diction, and is comparatively deficient in the variety of natural imagery, and the tenderness of domestic pathos which belong to the bards of Olney and Hursley, he may be ranked above Keble in terseness and vigour, while his manly cheerfulness is a delightful contrast to the morbid gloom which throws its chilling shade over many of Cowper's most beautiful passages. In the general characteristics of profound and reflective philosophy, Herbert and Trench may be classed together. Between Herbert and Keble the resemblance is still more striking. The influence of the older poet is very perceptible throughout 'the Christian Year,'—here and there in the very words of it." Keble's indebtedness to Herbert is, in truth, very considerable. Lastly, we turn to George Macdonald, whose poetic sensibility and devotional insight fit him to judge the author of "The Temple" sympathetically. "No writer before him," he says, "has shown such a love in God, such a child-like confidence in Him . . . Yet George Herbert had had difficulty enough in himself; for, born of high family, by nature fitted to shine in that society where elegance of mind, person, carriage, and utterance is most appreciated, and having, indeed, enjoyed something of the life of a courtier, he had forsaken all in obedience to the

voice of his higher nature. Hence the struggle between his tastes and his duties would come and come again, augmented probably by such austere notions as every conscientious man must entertain in proportion to his inability to find God in that in which he might find him. From his inability, inseparable in its varying degrees from the very nature of growth, springs all the asceticism of good men, whose love to God will be the greater as their growing insight reveals Him in His world, and their growing faith approaches to the giving of thanks in everything. . . . It will be observed how much George Herbert goes beyond all who preceded him, in the expression of feeling as it flows from individual conditions, in the analysis of his own moods, in the logic of worship, if I may say so. His utterance is not merely of personal love and grief, but of the peculiar love and grief in the heart of George Herbert. There may be disease in such a mind ; but, if there be, it is a disease that will burn itself out. Such disease is, for men constituted like him, the only path to health. By health I mean that simple regard to the truth, to the will of God, which will turn away a man's eyes from his own conditions, and leave God free to work His perfection on him—free, that is, of the interference of the man's self-consciousness and anxiety. To this perfection S. Paul had come when he no longer cried out against the body of his death, no more judged his own self, but left all to the Father, caring only to do His will. It was enough to him then that God

should judge him, for His will is the one good thing securing all good things. Amongst the keener delights of the life which is at the door, I look for the face of George Herbert, with whom to talk humbly would be in bliss a higher bliss."

There is little more to be said. We have endeavoured to set before the reader what seem to us and to others the distinctive features of Herbert's genius and character as a poet; his thoughtfulness, his love of nature, his wealth of fancy, his all-absorbing piety, his gentle sympathies, his fine musical expression, and his devotion to the Church of England, in which he was bred, which he served loyally, loved passionately, and in which he died. We have alluded to his many conceits and his partiality for fanciful, not to say eccentric, forms of versification. It would be easy, in conclusion, to show that he commanded a keen and ready wit; and to illustrate his power of condensing "a world of meaning" into a phrase. But we prefer to quote a specimen of his lyric flow, and of the graceful earnestness with which he can treat a subject seemingly trite and commonplace.

VIRTUE.

"Sweet Day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

"Sweet Rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

" Sweet Spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

" Only a sweet, and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives ;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives."

We have here more than one example of the way in which Herbert dignifies and consecrates, so to speak, an image homely in itself, and in other hands mean, if not vulgar. It is necessary we should also show how he sometimes takes up an odd and unusual fancy, and converts it into a suggestive illustration, or uses it to enforce and impress upon the mind a familiar truth.

LOVE-JOY.

" As on a window late I cast mine eye,
I saw a vine drop grapes with J and C
Anneal'd on every bunch. One standing by
Asked what it meant. I (who am never loth
To spend my judgment) said : ' It seemed to me
To be the body and the letters both
Of Joy and Charity.' ' Sir, you have not miss'd,'
The man replied, ' it figures Jesus Christ.' "

But we must close this section with the eager, the almost passionate stanzas in which he celebrates the Church he loved so well :—

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

" I joy, dear mother, when I view
Thy perfect lineaments and true,
Both sweet and bright.

"Beauty in thee takes up her place,
And dates her letters from thy face,
When she doth write.

"A fine aspect in fit array,
Neither too mean nor yet too gay,
Shows who is best.

"Outlandish looks may not compare;
For all they either painted are,
Or else undrest.

"She on the hills,* which wantonly
Allureth all in hope to be
By her preferr'd,

"Hath kiss'd so long her painted shrines,
That ev'n her face by kissing shines,
For her reward.

"She † in the valley is so shy
Of dressing, that her hair doth lie
About her ears;

"While she avoids her neighbour's pride,
She wholly goes on th' other side,
And nothing wears.

"But, dearest mother, what thou miss,
The mean, thy praise and glory is,
And long may be.

"Blessèd be God, whose love it was
To double-moat ‡ thee with His grace,
And name but thee."

George Herbert was born on the 3rd of April, 1593, at the Castle of Montgomery. He belongs to

* The Church of Rome.

† Puritanism.

‡ To encompass, as a castle is encompassed with two moats.

the category of our "noble authors," having sprung from "a generous, noble, and ancient family;" "a family that," as Walton says, "hath been blessed with men of remarkable wisdom, and a willingness to serve their country, and, indeed, to do good to all mankind; for which they are eminent." His father was Richard Herbert, who died in 1597, great-grandson of the famous Sir Richard Herbert of Colebrook; and his mother, Magdalen Newport, youngest daughter of Sir Richard Newport. She bore to her husband seven sons and three daughters, which, she would often say, was Job's number and Job's distribution; "and as often bless God, that they were neither defective in their shapes, nor in their reason." George Herbert was the fifth son. He spent much of his childhood under the eye and care of his widowed mother, a woman of unusual intellectual gifts and force of character, with the assistance of a chaplain or tutor. In his twelfth year he was sent to Westminster School, under the supervision of Dr. Neale, then Dean of Westminster, and Mr. Richard Ireland, head master. There "the beauties of his pretty behaviour and wit shined and became so innocent and lovely in this his innocent age, that he seemed to be marked out for piety, and to become the man of heaven, and of a particular good angel to govern and guide him."

Having gained a good acquaintance with the learned languages, then the chief objects of study, and attained the distinction of a King's Scholarship, he was elected to Trinity College, Cambridge, in

May, 1609. At college his prudent mother procured him the advantage of the "particular care" of the master, Dr. Nevil, Dean of Canterbury; and he speedily gained distinction by the assiduous exercise of his rare abilities, as well as by the purity and chivalrous delicacy of his conduct. He became a ripe scholar in French, Italian, and Spanish, mastered the classical tongues, and carefully studied Hebrew. His leisure was chiefly spent in the practice of music, in which he attained to a remarkable proficiency; and of which he would say, that it relieved his drooping spirits, composed his distracted thoughts, and raised his weary soul so far above earth that it gave him an earnest of the joys of Heaven before he possessed them. In 1612, being then nineteen, he published two Latin poems on the lamented death of Prince Henry, the "English Marcellus," in the *Epicedium Cantabrigiense*. In the same year he took his degree of B.A.; in 1615, M.A. Three years later he held the post of "Rhetoric Reader;" and in 1620 was elected "Public Orator," an honour which he seems to have greatly coveted. "It is the finest place in the University," he writes; "though not the gainfullest; yet that will be about £30 per annum. But the commodiousness is beyond the revenue, for the Orator writes all the University letters, be it to the king, prince, or whoever comes to the University. To requite these pains, he takes place next to the doctors, is at all their assemblies and meetings, and sits above the proctors."

In this capacity his first duty was to thank

James I., in the name of the University, for the gift of a copy of his "Basilicon Doron." The letter was written in such admirable Latinity, and so studded with conceits adapted to the royal taste, that the king inquired the writer's name, and asked of William, Earl of Pembroke, if he knew him. The earl replied that he knew him very well; that he was his kinsman, but that he loved him more for his learning and virtue than because he was of his name and family. With a smile the king asked that he might be allowed to love him also; for he took him to be "the jewel" of the University. The king, at this time, paid frequent visits to Newmarket and Royston, to indulge in his favourite pastime of the chase; and was almost as often invited to Cambridge, where he was entertained with dramatic performances, and elaborate compliments from the Orator. In these visits he was generally accompanied by Lord Bacon and Bishop Andrewes, with whom George Herbert became acquainted, forming a friendship which lasted until death. Walton informs us "that the first (Lord Bacon) put such a value on his (the Orator's) judgment, that he usually desired his approbation before he exposed any of his books to be printed; and thought him so worthy of his friendship that, having translated many of the Prophet David's Psalms into English verse, he made George Herbert his patron by a public dedication of them to him, as the best judge of divine poetry." And as to Bishop Andrewes, "there fell to be a modest debate betwixt them about

Predestination and Sanctity of life; of both which the Orator did not long after send the bishop some safe and useful aphorisms in a long letter written in Greek; which letter was so remarkable for the language and reason of it, that after the reading it, the bishop put it into his bosom, and did often show it to many scholars, both of this and foreign nations; but did always return it back to the place where he first lodged it, and continued it so near his heart till the last day of his life."

At this time Herbert's thoughts seem to have turned towards a civil career, for which he may reasonably have considered himself fitted by his talents and accomplishments, and his noble connections. His circumstances would appear to have been straitened, and he rejoiced when the king bestowed on him the valuable sinecure rectory of Whitford, which had formerly been held by Sir Philip Sidney. This, with his oratorship and "the advantages of his college," enabled him to gratify his love of brave attire and his partiality for "Court-like company." Frequent attacks of illness inclined him to quit the University altogether, and travel abroad; but his mother being strongly opposed to so abrupt a termination of a promising career, he abandoned the design. His desires again reverted to political advancement; but Providence had marked him out for a "higher and better life." In his poem of "Affliction" may be traced an allusion to the crisis in his career, when a Divine Hand guided him into the path adapted to his genius:—

- "Whereas my birth and spirit rather took
The way that takes the town :
Thou didst betray me to a lingering book,
And wrap me in a gown :
I was entangled in a world of strife
Before I had the power to change my life.
- "Yet, for I threatened oft the siege to raise,
Not simpering all mine age :
Thou often didst with academic praise
Melt, and dissolve my rage :
I took the sweetened pill, till I came where
I could not go away, nor persevere.
- "Yet lest, perchance, I should too happy be
In my unhappiness ;
Turning my purge to food, thou throwest me
Into more sicknesses.
Thus doth Thy cross bias me, not making
Thine own gifts good ; yet me from my ways taking."

While he was still pausing on the threshold of the world, the two friends died to whose patronage he had mainly trusted, the Duke of Richmond and the Marquis of Hamilton, and with them died all his hopes of Court favour. Disappointed and discontented, he retired to a friend's house in Kent, where he lived in so profound a seclusion that his health suffered. At this time (1625-6) he was greatly disturbed in mind by conflicting tendencies, and constantly argued with himself whether he should return to what Walton calls "the painted pleasures of a Court life," or enter on a course of theological study, and take holy orders. After a severe conflict his higher aspirations prevailed, and he resolved to devote himself to the service of the altar. That he

came to this resolution in no unworldly spirit and from no worldly motive, is apparent from his noble reply to a "Court friend" who sought to dissuade him from the ministry as too mean an employment for a man of his high birth and powerful abilities. "It hath been formerly judged," he said, "that the domestic servants of the King of Heaven should be of the noblest families on earth, and though the iniquity of the late times have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible, yet will I labour to make it honourable by consecrating all my learning and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God that gave them; knowing that I can never do too much for Him that hath done so much for me as to make me a Christian. And I will labour to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the eyes of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my dear Jesus."

He seems to have been still a layman when Bishop Williams of Lincoln promoted him to the prebend and church of Leighton Bromswold, in Huntingdonshire (July 15, 1626); but he was immediately afterwards admitted to deacon's orders. His first care was to visit the church that had thus passed into his custody, and finding it in a ruinous condition, he gave orders for its restoration. The cost was defrayed by himself and his friends. "He made it so much his whole business that he became restless till he saw it finished, as it now stands; being, for the workmanship, a costly mosaic; for the

form, an exact cross ; and, for the decency and beauty, the most remarkable parish church," says Walton, "that this nation affords. He lived to see it so wainscoted as to be excelled by none ; and, by his order, the reading-pew and pulpit were a little distant from each other, and both of an equal height. For he would often say, 'They should neither have a precedency nor priority of the other ; but, that prayer and preaching being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have an equal honour and estimation.' "

The work into which Herbert thus threw himself was at first condemned by his mother as beyond his means and above his physical strength. He besought her, however, that she would allow him, at the age of thirty-three years, to become an undutiful son, and to fulfil the solemn vow he had made. His filial submissiveness and his cogent arguments so greatly moved her that she gladly subscribed £50 towards the cost, and prevailed upon William, Earl of Pembroke, to give a similar amount, which he afterwards increased to £100, on receipt of "a witty and persuasive letter" from Mr. Herbert.

In the following year (1627) he sustained a severe blow in the death of his mother. His love and reverence for her, and his profound grief at her loss, gave birth to the "in memoriam" poem of the "Parentalia," which is full of pathetic touches and tender expressions of sensibility. We may reasonably conclude that it was owing to the effect of this heavy affliction on an already weakened frame, that

he resigned his oratorship, and retired to his brother Sir Henry's house at Woodford in Essex. There he remained a twelvemonth in a very feeble condition. Signs of pulmonary disease becoming apparent, he removed to Dantsey in Wiltshire, the seat of Lord Danvers. In this place, by adopting an abstemious regimen, refraining from excessive study, and enjoying open air exercise and cheerful conversation, his health improved; whereupon he declared his resolution both to marry and to enter into the sacred order of priesthood.

This seems to us, as it seemed to Izaak Walton, a fitting opportunity for describing Herbert's person, and giving a short account of his wife. Herbert in stature inclined towards tallness; "his body was very straight, and so far from being cumbered with too much flesh, that he was lean to an extremity." He was of a gracious and even cheerful aspect; courteous in manner and pleasing in address, so as to purchase "love and respect from all that knew him." The lady was a Miss Jane Danvers, the daughter of Mr. Charles Danvers, of Barnton; who had fallen in love with Mr. Herbert before she saw him, from the good report her father gave of him, and after she saw him had her love confirmed and strengthened by his many admirable qualities. She herself was a woman of considerable culture and ability; and the union proved a union of hearts and minds, in life and death. So happy were they "that there never was any opposition betwixt them, unless it were a contest which should most incline to a compliance

with the other's desires. And though this begot, and continued in them, such a natural love and joy and content, as was no way defective; yet, this mutual content, and love and joy, did receive a daily augmentation, by such daily obligingness to each other, as still added such new affluences to the former fulness of those divine souls as was only improvable in heaven, where they now enjoy it."

About three months after his marriage, Herbert was presented to the living of Bemerton, in Wiltshire, which, after much spiritual conflict, and great apprehension lest he should prove unequal to the work, he accepted. His irresolution was conquered, according to Walton, by the advice and authority of Laud, then Bishop of London; and he was both instituted and inducted into the vicarage of Bemerton, on the 21st of April, 1630. "When he was shut into the church," on this occasion, "being left there alone to toll the bell (as the law requires), he stayed so much longer than an ordinary time before he returned to those friends that stayed expecting him at the church-door, that his friend Mr. Woodnot looked in at the church window, and saw him lie prostrate on the ground before the altar," praying to his Master for strength to do his duty by the souls committed to his charge.

At this time he was still in deacon's orders; but in the following Ember week he was admitted to the priesthood.

His earliest undertaking in his new sphere of labour was the renovation of the parish church, and

the rebuilding of the parsonage, and of a chapel adjoining. He then addressed himself to the faithful discharge of his pastoral duties; and the spirit in which he worked may be understood from the nature of the rules which he set down for his own guidance. These are embodied in his manual, "The Country Parson;"* from which we may extract his ideal of "The Parson's Life"—an ideal which Herbert more than realized:—

"The country parson is exceeding exact in his life, being holy, just, prudent, temperate, bold, grave, in all his ways. And because the two highest points of life wherein a Christian is most sure are patience and mortification—patience in regard of afflictions; mortification in regard of lusts and affections, and the stupefying and deadening of all the clamorous powers of the soul—therefore he hath thoroughly studied these, that he may be an absolute master and commander of himself, for all the purposes which God hath ordained him. Yet in these points he labours most in those things which are most apt to scandalize his parish. And first, because country people live hardly, and, therefore, as feeling their own sweat, and consequently knowing the price of money, are offended much with any who, by hard usage increase their travail, the country parson is very circumspect in avoiding all covetousness, neither being greedy to get, nor niggardly to keep, nor troubled to lose any worldly wealth; but in all

* "A Priest to the Temple; or, the Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life." Published in 1652.

his words and actions slighting and discolouring it, even to a wondering that the world should so much value wealth, which in the day of wrath hath not one dram of comfort for us. Secondly, because luxury is a very visible sin, the parson is very careful to avoid all kinds thereof; but especially that of drinking, because it is the most popular vice; into which, if he come, he prostitutes himself both to shame and sin, and, by having 'fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness' (Ephesians v. 11), he disableth himself of authority to reprove them; for sins make all equal whom they find together, and then they are worst who ought to be best. Neither is it for the servant of Christ to haunt inns or taverns or alehouses, to the dishonour of his person and office. The parson doth not so, but orders his life in such a fashion, that when death takes him, as the Jews and Judas did Christ, he may say as He did, 'I sat daily with you teaching in the temple' (S. Matthew xxvi., 55). Thirdly, because country people (as indeed all honest men), do much esteem their word, it being the life of buying and selling and dealing in the world; therefore the parson is very strict in keeping his word, though it be to his own hindrance, as knowing that if he be not so he will quickly be discovered and disregarded; neither will they believe him in the pulpit whom they cannot trust in his conversation. As for oaths and apparel, the disorders thereof are also very manifest. The parson's yea is *yea*, and nay, *nay*; and his apparel plain, but reverent and clean, without spots

or dust or smell ; the purity of his mind breaking out and dilating itself even to his body, clothes, and habitation."

It was a habit of the parson of Bemerton to select the texts from his sermons out of the gospel for the day ; and the sermons themselves were always couched in plain and intelligible language, with a substratum of solid reasoning calculated to engage and interest a thoughtful hearer. He was careful to explain to his people the meaning and connection of the Church's services, and of their various parts ; nor did he forget to trace each consecutive phase of the Church's year, bringing out its appropriate lessons, and dwelling upon the sacred event it was intended to commemorate. From Advent to Lent, and Lent to Trinity, and Trinity round again to Advent, he loved to note each memorable day, each holy fast or feast ; clinging to them as tenderly as men cling to the dearest or most solemn anniversaries in their own lives. Every Sunday afternoon he gave half an hour to catechizing his congregation ; for the rubrics to George Herbert were rules to be strictly and joyously obeyed, and not stealthily evaded. Twice a day, during the week, he attended prayers in the parsonage chapel, lifting up pure and charitable hands, and a loving heart to God in the midst of the congregation. In this, the effect of his example was even more powerful than that of his precepts. His evident sincerity, and eager, humble piety, attracted to these daily services most of his parishioners and many gentlemen in the neighbour-

hood, for how can the sun shine without men seeking to warm themselves in its meridian glow? And some of the "meaner sort" did so love and reverence him that they would let their plough rest when his "saint's bell" * rung to prayers, that they might also offer their devotions to God with him, after which they would return to their plough. Such was the pure influence of his stainless life, and so abundantly did it kindle a deep reverence to God and affection towards himself, that they felt the happier when they carried Mr. Herbert's blessing back with them to their work.

- In his constant public prayers he neither sought nor found an excuse for neglect of private devotion, in which he was not less assiduous than good Bishop
- Andrewes, or of family worship, for which he always used a "set form," concluding with the collect appointed for the day or week. His principal recreation was music, on the wings of which his spirit seemed to soar to heaven. He was an admirable musician, both in theory and practice, and composed many "divine hymns and anthems," which he sat and sung to his lute or viol. So great was his love of music, that it prevailed over his love of retirement and drew him twice a week to the Cathedral of Salisbury. On his return he was accustomed to say, "That the time he spent in prayer and cathedral music elevated his soul, and was his heaven upon earth." Prior to his return to Bemerton on these occasions, he would usually sing and play his part

* The small bell rung at the "ter sanctus."

at an appointed private music meeting; and in justification of this practice would remark, "Religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rule to it."

In praying and preaching, and in works of love and mercy, George Herbert spent the few years that remained to him on earth. Latterly his disease (which was of a pulmonary character) so weakened him, that he was confined to his house or the adjoining chapel. There he continued to read prayers twice a day, despite his physical feebleness. On one occasion, his wife, observing that he read in pain, gently chided him, fearing the exercise increased his weakness. He confessed that it did; but added that his life could not be better spent than in the service of his Master, Who had done and suffered so much for him. "But I will not be wilful," he continued; "for though my spirit be willing, yet I find my flesh is weak. And, therefore, Mr. Bostock shall be appointed to read prayers for me to-morrow, and I will now be only a hearer of them, till this mortal shall put on immortality."

Cheered by the society of his friend, Mr. Woodnot, and lovingly tended by his devoted wife, Herbert daily drew nearer to the shore of the Eternal Sea. His serenity was that of a soul resting securely on the hope of the future life in Christ; and all his aspirations and anticipations breathed, as it were, a foretaste of heaven. The Sunday before his death, rising suddenly from his couch, he touched his lute with trembling fingers, and sang:—

“My God, my God,
My music shall find Thee
And every string
Shall have His attribute to sing.”

After tuning it, he played and sang :—

“The Sundays of man’s life,
Threaded together on Time’s string,
Make bracelets to adorn the wife
Of the eternal glorious King ;
On Sundays, heaven’s door stands ope,
Blessings are plentiful and rife,
More plentiful than hope.

“Thus,” says Walton, “thus he sang on earth such hymns and anthems as the angels and he now sing in heaven.”

On the day of his death, he turned to Mr. Woodnot and said, “My dear friend, I am sorry I have nothing to present to my merciful God but sin and misery ; but the first is pardoned, and a few hours will soon put a period to the latter, for I shall suddenly go home and be no more seen.” Mr. Woodnot reminded him of his many acts of charity, and his restoration of Leighton Church. “They be good works,” said Herbert, “if they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and not otherwise.” As the day advanced, he grew more restless ; and his uneasiness became so visible that his wife, his three nieces, and Mr. Woodnot remained constantly by his bed, regretting his evident pain, and yet unwilling to lose the sight of him whom they so loved and revered. Observing him to fall into a sudden agony, his wife, with an outburst of emotion, inquired of him how he did ;

and received for answer, "That he had passed a conflict with his last enemy, and had overcome him by the merits of his Master, Jesus." When he saw the tears rolling down the cheeks of his wife and nieces, he entreated them, if they loved him, to withdraw into the next room, and pray for him in private, since nothing but their lamentations, he said, could make his death uncomfortable. To this request their sorrow could not suffer them to reply ; but in silence they obeyed him, and left him alone with Mr. Woodnot and Mr. Bostock. To the latter he said, "Pray, sir, open that door ; then look into that cabinet, in which you may easily find my last will, and give it into my hand." His directions having been carried out, he delivered the document to Mr. Woodnot, and said, "My old friend, I here deliver you my last will, in which you will find that I have made you my sole executor for the good of my wife and nieces, and I desire you to show kindness to them as they shall need it. I do not desire you to be just, for I know you will be so for your own sake ; but, I charge you by the religion of our friendship, to be careful of them." Mr. Woodnot readily gave his promise to that effect. "I am ready to die," murmured the poet-pastor. "Lord forsake me not now my strength faileth me ; but grant me mercy for the merits of my Jesus. Lord, Lord, now receive my soul !" Uttering these words, he passed away to his rest without a struggle, his faithful friends closing his eyes.

"Thus he lived," says Walton, "and thus he died

like a saint; unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility and all the examples of a virtuous life; which I cannot conclude better than with this borrowed observation :— *

“ . . . All must to their cold graves ;
But the religious actions of the just
Smell sweet in death, and blossom in the dust.’

Mr. George Herbert’s have so done this, and will doubtless do so to succeeding generations. I wish (if God be so pleased) that I may be so happy as to die like him.”

Herbert, at the time of his death, was sixty years of age. He was buried in Bemerton Church, which has thus become one of the shrines dearest to the English pilgrim. The work to which he owes his enduring fame, “The Temple; or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations,” was published in 1633, a few months after his death. He was also the author of a curious collection of epigrammatic sayings and proverbial apothegms, entitled “*Jacula Prudentum* ;” a “*Treatise of Temperance and Sobriety*,” and the manual, already referred to, of “*A Priest of the Temple*.”

* The “observation” is borrowed, with considerable alteration, from the well-known “Dirge” in James Shirley’s “*Contention of Ajax and Achilles*,” to which Charles II. (Charles I. ?) is said to have been so partial. It is said also to have been a favourite with Cromwell in his latter days.

JEREMY TAYLOR,

BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR.

A.D. 1613—1687.

JEREMY TAYLOR, the greatest orator the English Church has produced—her Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue in one—the most popular, and, perhaps, the most influential of her divines—was the son of a Cambridge barber; and first saw the light in his father's house about the 13th of August, 1613.* Though of humble vocation, Taylor's father was descended from a respectable family,† and “reasonably well educated,” so that he could teach his children the elements of grammar and mathematics. At the early age of three, Jeremy began to attend Perse's grammar school, then recently founded; and at the age of thirteen he entered Caius College as a sizar or poor scholar. At that college he must often have seen the graceful and gracious youth who was afterwards to become the champion of Puritanism

* He is registered as baptized on the 15th.

† To this family belonged Dr. Rowland Taylor, Archbishop Cranmer's chaplain, who suffered martyrdom in the third year of Mary.

and the poet of the "Paradise Lost." * He must have heard, too, of George Herbert, the "sweet singer" of "The Temple;" and the name of Oliver Cromwell, then an undergraduate of Sidney Sussex College, may not have been wholly unfamiliar to him. The course of study at the universities in Taylor's days was not well adapted to develop the poetical side of his intellect. Cambridge was still teaching the old scholastic philosophy of the "unprofitable subtlety and curiosity" of which Bacon has spoken, while Milton characterizes its "ragged notions and brabblements" as "an asinine feast of sow-thistles and brambles." Duns Scotus and Avicenna still maintained their unprofitable influence. We can imagine that Taylor eagerly turned from their barren writings to the masterpieces of the Latin and Greek literature, the study of which had been popularised by the movement of the Renaissance. Yet to a genius so subtle and searching as his, it was doubtless easy to detect some grains of gold even in the sandy wastes of Occam, Lauretus, and Suarez.

In 1631 Taylor took his Bachelor's degree, and was soon afterwards elected to a Fellowship. Before proceeding to his degree of M.A., he received holy orders, though, like the illustrious Usher, he had not completed his twenty-first year. His future course in life was determined by one of those accidents or opportunities, which always occur to men capable of making use of them. At the request

* Milton entered Christ's College in 1625.

of one Ridsen, a college-companion, he preached for him at S. Paul's Cathedral; where "by his florid and youthful beauty, his sweet and pleasant air, and his sublime and learned discourses," he fixed the attention of the public. They took him, says Bishop Rust, for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory. The reports of his extraordinary powers spread to Lambeth; and Archbishop Laud, who was quick to perceive and recognize high merit, summoned him to preach before him. He saw at once the great promise of this brilliant youth; and thinking it more to the advantage of the world that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement than a course of constant preaching would allow of, he procured him the nomination to a Fellowship of All Souls, Oxford—a distinction of no ordinary kind, and of much pecuniary value. During his residence at Oxford the sweet courtesy of his manners, and his excellent casuistical preaching, made him the object of general admiration and esteem (1635-7). Laud also appointed him his chaplain; and, in 1637 persuaded Bishop Juxon to present him to the rectory of Uppingham, in Rutlandshire.

The fortunate young preacher was selected by his liberal patron to preach at S. Mary's, in that pulpit since occupied by so many illustrious men, on the 5th of November, 1638; and in connection with the sermon then delivered old Anthony à Wood tells a strange story of Taylor's intended secession to the Roman Church, affirming that the Vice-chancellor

interpolated certain passages in the sermon with the view of inducing the Romanists to reject his advances. The whole absurdity is probably grounded on Taylor's intimacy with the learned Franciscan, À Santa Clara, the queen's chaplain. There is abundant evidence in Jeremy Taylor's writings that no man was ever less favourable to the errors and assumptions of the Papacy; and his contempt for the Roman discipline was shown by his marriage, May 27, 1639, with Phoebe Landisdale.* This lady bore him three sons, one of whom, William, died in May, 1642, and was soon afterwards followed to the grave by his mother.

Five quiet years Taylor spent at Uppingham, while the storm of civil war broke over unhappy England. No doubt he felt very keenly the committal of his friend and patron, Laud, to the Tower (1640), which must have been a sign and a warning to him of the troublous days impending over the Church. He had no hesitation as to the side it was his duty to espouse; and when Charles finally broke with his parliament and retired to Oxford, Taylor hastened thither to join him, and was appointed his domestic chaplain. It was at the royal command that he published, in 1642, his first work, "Episcopacy Asserted," in which the case of "regimen by bishops" is cogently stated. It elicited considerable enthusiasm among the supporters of the Church; being "backed and encouraged by many petitions to his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament, not

* Or Langsdale.

only from the two universities whom it most concerned, but from several counties of the kingdom." The king rewarded the author with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Whether he joined the royal army at Nottingham is uncertain; but his living at Uppingham was one of the first sequestrated by the Parliament; his rectory house was pillaged, and his family driven out of doors. Finding himself without a home, he followed the king in his various marches, and gained that knowledge of military affairs which has furnished his sermons with so many apposite images and illustrations. In the beginning of 1644 he was with the royal army in Wales; and at the siege of Cardigan Castle was taken prisoner. His captors treated him gently, and soon released him; after which he supported himself for awhile by keeping school at Llanvihangel Aberbythic. "In this great storm," he writes to Lord Hatton, "which hath dashed the vessel of the Church all to pieces, I have been cast upon the coast of Wales, and, in a little boat, thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness which, in England, in a greater, I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor, and thinking to ride safely, the storm followed on with so impetuous violence that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor; and here again I was exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons. And but that He who stilleth the raging of the sea and the noise of His waves, and the madness of His people,

had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content or study. But I know not whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy; for 'the barbarous people showed us no little kindness; for, having kindled a fire, they received us all because of the present rain and the cold.' And now since I have come ashore, I have been gathering a few sticks to warm me, a few books to entertain my thoughts, and divert them from the perpetual meditation of my private troubles and the public dyscrasy; but those which I could obtain were so few and so impertinent, and unuseful to any great purposes, that I began to be sad upon a new stock, and full of apprehension that I should live unprofitably, and die obscurely, and be forgotten, and my bones thrown into some common charnel-house, without any name or note to distinguish me from those who only served their generation, by filling the number of citizens."

It was about this time that Jeremy Taylor found a second wife in the person of Mrs. Joanna Bridges, a lady of good means, who is said to have been a natural daughter of Charles I.; and a friend in Lord Carbery, whose seat of Golden Grove was situated in the same parish in which lay Taylor's "quiet work." His school was carried on with the assistance of William Nicholson, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, and William Wyatt, afterwards a Prebendary of Lincoln. For the use of their scholars Taylor and Wyatt composed a "Grammar," which was published

in 1647. In the same year he wrote and published his "Liberty of Propheying," a noble defence and exposition of the Catholic Faith as held by the Church of England. It was written, as he says in his dedicatory epistle to Lord Hatton, in poverty and tribulation, without books, or leisure to consult them, a circumstance which renders all the more wonderful the stores of learning lavished on every page. As one traces its powerful argument, and marks its affluence of illustration, and warms one's self in the sunshine of its poetical imagery, one can understand the admiration with which Coleridge always regarded it. In itself it justifies Coleridge's eulogies of its author as "the most eloquent of divines, I had almost said, of men; and if I had, Demosthenes would nod approval and Cicero express assent." Bishop Heber says of it, "On a work so rich in intellect, so renowned for charity, which contending sects have rivalled each other in approving, and which was the first, perhaps, since the earliest days of Christianity, to teach those among whom differences were inevitable, the art of differing harmlessly, it would be almost impertinent to enlarge in commendation." Had he never written any other book, the Christian Church, as Canon Farrar remarks, would have owed him a debt that could never be repaid. The cause of tolerance has had no mightier champion; and though it failed in its immediate object, it eventually established religious liberty on an impregnable basis. Its plan is exceedingly simple. Regarding the Apostles' Creed as

embodying the essence of Christian truth, he declares every subsidiary dogma to be superfluous or indifferent, and not to be required of others as a necessity of faith. The bold positions thus and there taken up, Taylor, with some slight occasional qualms when deeply tried by the violence of Irish Presbyterianism, maintained to the last. "I thought," he wrote in the epistle dedicatory, "it might not misbecome my duty and endeavours to plead for peace and charity and forgiveness and permissions mutual; although I had reason to believe that, such is the iniquity of men, and they so indisposed to receive real impresses,* that I had as good plough the sands, or till the air, as persuade such doctrines which destroy men's interests, and serve no end but the great end of a happy eternity, and what is in order to it. But because the events of things are in God's disposition, and I knew them not—and because, if I had known, my good purposes would be totally as ineffectual as to others—yet my own designation and purpose would be of advantage to myself, who might, from God's mercy, expect the retribution which He is pleased to promise to all pious intendments; I resolved to encounter with all objections, and to do something to each. I should be determined by the consideration of the present distemperatures and necessities, by my own thoughts, by the questions and scruples, the sects and names, the interests and animosities, which at this day, and

* Such was the case with Charles I., to whom the book was very unwelcome.

for some years past, have exercised and disquieted Christendom." Such was the high and chivalrous spirit in which Jeremy Taylor wrote.

We have no space here to distinguish the various links of the chain of argument which he has wrought out of the purest gold, and enriched and embellished with the most precious stones. But a specimen or two of his method and diction may reasonably be introduced. The essence of his reasoning seems infused into the beautiful parable (or allegory)* with which he takes farewell of the reader:—

"When Abraham sat at his tent-door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, he espied an old man stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age and travail, coming towards him, who was an hundred years of age. He received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, caused him to sit down, but observing that the old man sat and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing on his meat, he asked him why he did not worship the God of heaven. The old man told him that he worshipped the fire only, and acknowledged no other God. At which answer Abraham grew so zealously angry that he thrust the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night in an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone, God called to Abraham, and asked him where the stranger was.

* The original author was the Persian poet, Saadi. Taylor probably found the story in the dedication prefixed by George Gontius to his "*Historia Judaica*." It appears only in the second edition of the "*Liberty of Prophecy*ing."

He replied, 'I thrust him away because he did not worship Thee.' God answered him, 'I have suffered him these hundred years, although he dishonoured Me; and couldst not thou endure him one night, when he gave thee no trouble?' Upon this, saith the story, Abraham fetched him back again, and gave him hospitable entertainment and wise instruction. 'Go thou and do likewise,' he adds, 'and thy charity will be rewarded by the God of Abraham.'"

The true spirit of liberal piety and Christian fellowship which inspired our eloquent author is seen in his remarks on the Practice of Christian Churches towards persons who do not accept their formularies:—

"In S. Paul's time," he says, "though the manner of heretics were not so loose and forward as afterwards, and all that were called heretics were clearly such and highly criminal, yet as their crime was, so was their censure, that is, spiritual. They were first admonished, once at least, for so Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Jerome, read that place of Titus iii. But since that time all men, and at that time some read it, 'after a first and second admonition,' reject a heretic. 'Rejection from the community of saints after two warnings,' that is the penalty. S. John expresses it by not 'eating with them,' not 'bidding them God-speed,' but the persons against whom he decrees so severely, are such as denied Christ to be come in the flesh, direct Antichrists. And let the sentence be as high as it lists in this case, all that I observe is, that since in so damnable doctrines nothing but spiritual

censure, separation from the communion of the faithful was enjoined and prescribed, we cannot pretend to an apostolical precedent, if in matters of dispute and innocent questions, and of great uncertainty and no malignity, we shall proceed to sentence of death.

“ Well, however zealous the Apostles were against heretics, yet none were by them, or their dictates, put to death. The death of Ananias and Sapphira, and the blindness of Elymas the sorcerer, amount not to this, for they were miraculous inflictions; and the first was a punishment to vow-breach and sacrilege, the second of sorcery and open contestation against the religion of Jesus Christ; neither of them concerned the case of this present question. Or if the case were the same, yet the authority is not the same: for he that inflicted these punishments was infallible, and of a power competent; but no man at this day is so. But as yet people were converted by miracles, and preaching, and disputing, and heretics by the same means were endangered, and all men instructed, none tortured for their opinion. And this continued till Christian people were vexed by disagreeing persons, and were impatient and peevish by their own too much confidence, and the luxuriancy of a prosperous fortune; but then they would not endure persons that did dogmatize anything which might intrench upon their reputation or their interest. And it is observable that no man nor no age did ever teach the lawfulness of putting heretics to death, till they grew wanton with prosperity; but when the

reputation of the governors was concerned, when the interests of men were endangered, when they had something to lose, when they had built their estimation upon the credit of disputable questions, when they began to be jealous of other men, when they overvalued themselves and their own opinions, when some persons invaded bishoprics upon pretence of new opinions, when they, as they throve in the favour of emperors, and in the success of their disputes, solicited the temporal power to banish, to fine, to imprison, and to kill, their adversaries.

“So that the case stands thus: In the best times, among the best men, when there were fewer temporal ends to be served, when religion and the pure and simple designs of Christianity only were to be promoted, in those times and amongst such men no persecution was actual nor persuaded, nor allowed, towards disagreeing persons. But as men had ends of their own and not of Christ, as they receded from their duty, and religion from its purity, as Christianity began to be compounded with interests and blended with temporal designs, so men were persecuted for their opinions.”

How fine in thought and expression is the following:—

“As it was true of the martyrs, as often as we die, so often we are born, and the increase of their trouble was the increase of their confidence and the establishment of their persuasions; so it is in all false opinions; for that an opinion is true or false is extrinsical or accidental to the consequents

and advantages it gets by being afflicted. And there is a popular pity that follows all persons in misery, and that compassion breeds likeness of affections, and that very often produces likeness of persuasion; and so much the rather, because there arises a jealousy and pregnant suspicion that they who persecute an opinion are destitute of sufficient arguments to confute it, and that the hangman is the best disputant. For if those arguments which they have for their own doctrine, were a sufficient ground of confidence and persuasion, men would be more willing to use those means and arguments, which are better compliances with human understanding, which more naturally do satisfy it, which are more human and Christian, than that way which satisfies none, which destroys many, which provokes more, and which makes all men jealous. To which add, that those who die for their opinion, have in all men great arguments of the heartiness of their belief, of the confidence of their persuasion, of the piety and innocency of their persons, of the purity of their intention and simplicity of purposes, that they are persons totally disinterested, and separate from design. For no interest can be so great as to be put in balance against a man's life and his soul; and he does very imprudently serve his ends who, simply and foreknowingly, loses his life in the prosecution of them. Just as if Titus should offer to die for Sempronius upon condition he might receive twenty talents, when he had done his work. It is certainly an argument of a great

love, and a great confidence, and a great sincerity, and a great hope, when a man lays down his life in attestation of a proposition. 'Greater love than this hath no man, than to lay down his life,' saith our blessed Saviour. And although laying of a wager is an argument of confidence more than truth; yet laying such a wager, staking of a man's soul, and pawning his life, give a hearty testimony that the person is honest, confident, resigned, charitable, and noble. And I know not whether truth can do a person or a cause more advantages than those can do to an error. And, therefore, besides the impiety, there is great imprudence in canonizing a heretic, and consecrating an error by such means, which were better preserved as encouragements of truth and comforts to real and true martyrs. And it is not amiss to observe, that this very advantage was given by heretics, who were ready to show and boast their catalogues of martyrs; in particular the Circumcellinis did so, and the Donatists; and yet the first were heretics, the second schismatics. And it was remarkable in the scholars of Priscillian, who as they held their master in the reputation of a saint while he was living, so, when he was dead, they held him in veneration as a martyr; they with reverence and devotion carried him and the bodies of his slain companions to an honourable sepulture, and counted it religion to swear by the name of Priscillian. So that the extinguishing of the person gives life and credit to his doctrine, and when he is dead, he yet speaks more effectually."

It is an excellent saying of Taylor's, that God places a watery cloud in the eye, so that when the light of heaven shines on it, it may produce a rainbow to be a sacrament and a memorial that God and the sons of men do not love to see a man perish. Such rainbows often shone across the clouds of Taylor's life. He had many seasons of adversity, but they never failed to be illuminated by the glory of a true friendship. "When the north wind blows," he says, "and it rains sadly, none but fools sit down in it, and cry; wise people defend themselves against it with a warm garment, a good fire, and a dry roof." All these he found at this time in Golden Grove, the beautiful seat of Lord Carbery. Woods, with the song of birds, and the Towy, with its ripple of waters, were there to soothe the mind and stimulate the imagination. The images with which he loved to ornament his richly-flowing prose were thickly suggested to him by the green sides and broad uplands of the valley which stretches from Carmarthen to Llandovery. A pleasant object in the landscape was the fair eminence of Grongar Hill, which Dyer has celebrated in his pastoral verse. A picture of so much tranquil beauty could not fail to be appreciated by Taylor, who was a true poet, though he wrote in prose. "I am fallen," he writes, "into the hands of publicans and sequestrators, and they have taken all from me; what now? Let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and I can still

discourse, and unless I list, they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience; they have still left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate. *I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the variety of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights—that is, in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God Himself.*"

Willmott justly remarks that the influence of the fair scenery by which he was so happily surrounded is perceptible in the works he composed at Golden Grove; they are full of passages of rural description which breathe the earnest fragrance of poetry. His illustration of the prayer of a Christian heart by the heavenward flight of the lark is deservedly familiar to every reader.

"So have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the vibration and frequent weighing of its wings, till the little creature sat down to pout and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music from an angel, as he passed sometimes through

the air about his ministering here below. So is the prayer of a good man."

Here, not only is the thought exquisite, beautiful in itself and apposite, but the language is marked by a *curiosa felicitas* which is peculiarly Taylor's own. It is difficult to know which to admire the more, the stateliness of the rhythm, or the happy choice of epithet.

As, for instance, he tells us that "the love of the Divine Architect has scattered the firmament with stars, as a man sows corn in his fields;" and the voice of a dying man is compared to "the faint echo of a distant valley." His description of the change after death can never be forgotten. "So have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and at first it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven as a lamb-fleece; but, when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head and broke its stalk, and at night having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces."

Or what shall we say to his glowing picture of "the sun approaching towards the gates of the morning, first opening a little eye of heaven, and sending away the spirits of darkness, and giving light to a cock, and calling up the lark to orations, and by-and-by gilding the fringes of a cloud, peeping over the eastern hills, thrusting out his

golden horns like those which decked the brow of Moses, when he was forced to wear a veil, because himself had seen the face of God ?”

See how he embellishes the relations that should exist between the Church and the State : “ For so doth the humble ivy creep at the foot of the oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage ; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the *leafy nation*.”

Again : “ So have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north ; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels ; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance a while in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer. So is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter ; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fetters and chains of sorrow ; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning ; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted ; so God is pleased with no music from below so much as in the thanksgiving songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons.”

When we read such passages as these we understand why Mason called Taylor the Shakespeare of English prose; and why Mr. Lecky has compared his diction to "a deeply murmuring sea with the sunlight on it."

The joy of nature which filled his soul led our prose-poet to descant on "the breath of heaven, not willing to disturb the softest stalk of a violet;" on "the gentle wind shaking the leaves with a refreshment and cooling shade;" on "the rainbow, half made of the glory of light, and half of the moisture of a cloud;" and on "the fountain swelling over the green turf." He acted on his own advice, and found in God's revelation in creation a constant source of praise and thanksgiving. "Let everything you see represent to your spirit the excellency and the power of God, and let your conversation with the creatures lead you unto the Creator; and so shall your actions be done more frequently with an eye to God's presence, by your often seeing Him in the glass of the creation. In the face of the sun you may see God's beauty; in the fire you may feel His heart warming; in the water His gentleness to refresh you; it is the dew of heaven that makes your field give you bread."

Two more brief specimens:—

"As the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastic juice to the utmost branch and smallest germ that knots in the most distant parts; so the great and exemplary piety of the father

of a family not only preserves to his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickening spirit, active and communicative of blessing, not only to the trunk of the tree, the body, and rightly descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that claim a kindred shall have a title to a blessing."

And, lastly, in reference to the sanctification of sickness by the grace of God:—

"For so have I known the boisterous north wind pass through the yielding air, which opened its bosom, and appeased its violence, by entertaining it with easy compliance in all the regions of its reception. But where the same breath of heaven hath been checked with the stiffness of a tower, or the united strength of a wood, it grew mighty, and dwelt there, and made the highest branches stoop, and make a smooth path for it on the top of all its glories."

The genius of Taylor found a congenial soil in Golden Grove, and expanded there into its richest blossom and fruit. To this period of ripeness we owe his "Holy Living and Dying," his "Life of Christ," his "Sermons," or, at least, some of the most admirable, his "Treatise on the Real Presence," and the volume of devotions which he entitled the "Golden Grove." This enumeration leads us to speak of the chief characteristics of Jeremy Taylor as a divine, a writer, a preacher, a theologian. In all four capacities he exhibited the same wonderful

affluence of diction, richness and solidity of thought, copiousness and variety of illustration. In all, he exhibited the same well-balanced judgment and dislike of extremes; a dislike which sometimes led him, after the utterance of a strong statement, to qualify it in a later work. In all, he exhibited the same liberal and enlightened spirit, and the same disregard of forms when balanced against verities. As to his style, "the mind, the music" breathing in it commands universal admiration. When every deduction has been made by the most censorious; when we have admitted his occasional exuberance, the confusion of his images, his introduction of what to our modern taste seems grotesque and offensive, he remains, beyond all question, one of the three or four greatest masters of English prose. There is a harmony, a rich rhythmical movement, in his sentences which cannot be surpassed. They have the "swelling note" and sonorous cadences of the organ. More plastic than the rhetorical style of Gibbon, it is more sweeping than that of Hooker, and more majestic than that of South. Sir Thomas Browne approaches nearer to him than any other English writer; but he lacks the poetical sensibilities and picturesque allusiveness of Taylor. This allusiveness, we may go on to point out, is one of his most striking features. Images, similes, metaphors, illustrations, came to him naturally from the treasures of his reading, his experience, and his observation. Yet not less striking is the grandeur of his conceptions. He seems to have lived always in an atmo-

sphere of elevated thought. The greatest ideas were his ordinary food. He dealt with them as easily as meaner minds deal with their little commonplaces. Pathos, terror, sublimity, tenderness; he struck each chord of the manifold lyre with equal skill. He was master alike of the serene pencil of Claude and the deep vivid colouring of Salvator Rosa. He could paint scenes which even Dante could hardly equal for horror, or Spenser for sweetness.

Of his many-sidedness we select a few specimens:—

“All the successions of time, all the changes in nature, all the varieties of light and darkness, the thousand thousands of accidents in the world, and every contingency to every man, and to every creature, doth preach our funeral sermon, and calls us to look and see how the old sexton Time throws up the earth and digs a grave, where we must lay our sins or our sorrows, and sow our bodies, till they rise again in a fair or an intolerable eternity.”

“When persecution hurls a man down from a large fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave, a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites; and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul’s prison, and let the soul fly to the mountains of rest. And all the intermediate evils are but like the Persian punishments: the executioner tore off

their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to His servants; He rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance."

"So shall it be at the day of judgment, when that world and this, and all that shall be born hereafter, shall pass through the same Red Sea, and be all baptized with the same fire, and be involved in the same cloud, in which shall be *thunderings and terrors infinite*; every man's fear shall be increased by his neighbour's shrieks; and the amazement that all the world shall be in shall unite, as *the sparks of a raging furnace, into a globe of fire*, and roll upon its own principle, and increase by direct appearances and intolerable reflections. . . . And at doomsday, when the terrors are universal, besides that it is itself so much greater because it can affright the whole world, it is also made greater by communication and a sorrowful influence; grief being, then, strongly infectious, when there is no variety of state, but an entire kingdom of fear; and amazement is the king of all our passions, and all the world its subjects. And that shriek must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women, at the same

instant, shall fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the archangel, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and the crack of the dissolving world;* when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. But this general consideration may be heightened with four or five circumstances. Consider what an infinite multitude of angels and men and women shall appear. It is a huge assembly, when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps of confusion and disorder; but then, all kingdoms of all ages, all the armies that ever mustered, all the world that Augustus Cæsar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars, from Homer's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates, all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the lines of Adam, shall at once be represented."

"The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and

- * "And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

Tempest, iv. 1.

breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted by little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels. So is a man's prayer; if it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermedial regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the Throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment. I deny not but some little drops will turn aside, and fall from the full channel by the weakness of the banks, and hollowness of the passage; but the main course is still continued; and although the most earnest and devout persons feel and complain of some looseness of spirit, and unfixed attentions, yet their love and their desire secure the main portions, and make the prayer to be strong, fervent, and effectual."

"Religion is worth as much to-day as it was yesterday, and that cannot change though we do; and if we do, we have left God, and whither he can go that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him. This fire must never go out, but it must be like the fire of heaven, it must shine like the stars, though sometimes covered with a cloud, or obscured by a greater light; yet they

dwell for ever in their orbs, and walk in their circles, and observe their circumstances, but go not out by day nor night, and set not when kings die, nor are extinguished when nations change their government; so must the real zeal of a Christian be, a constant incentive of his duty; and though sometimes his hand is drawn back by violence or need, and his prayers shortened by the importunity of business, and some parts omitted by necessities, and just compliances, yet still the fire is kept alive; it burns within when the light breaks not forth, and is eternal as the orb of fire, or the embers of the altar of incense."

"Because friendship is that by which the world is most blessed and receives most good, it ought to be chosen amongst the worthiest persons, that is, amongst those that can do greatest benefit to each other; and though in equal worthiness I may choose by my eye, or ear, that is, into the consideration of the essential I may take in also the accidental and extrinsic worthinesses; yet I ought to give every one their just value; when the internal beauties are equal, these shall help to weigh down the scale, and I will love a worthy friend that can delight me as well - as profit me, rather than him who cannot delight me at all, and profit me no more; but yet I will not weigh the gayest flowers, or the wings of butterflies, against wheat; but when I am to choose wheat, I may take that which looks the brightest. I had rather see thyme and roses, marjoram and July flowers (gilliflowers), that are fair, sweet, and

medicinal, than the prettiest tulips, that are good for nothing; and my sheep and kine are better servants than racehorses and greyhounds; and I shall rather furnish my study with Plutarch and Cicero, with Livy and Polybius, than with Cassandra and Ibrahim Bassa; and if I do give one hour to those for divertisement or pleasure, yet will I dwell with those that can instruct me, and make me wise and eloquent, severe and useful to myself and others. I end this with the saying of Lælius in Cicero: 'Friendship ought not to follow utility, but utility friendship.' When I choose my friend, I will not stay till I have received a kindness; but I will choose such a one as can do me many if I need them; but I mean such kindnesses which make me wiser, and which make me better; that is, I will, when I choose my friend, choose him that is the bravest, the worthiest, and the most excellent person; and then your question is soon answered. To love such a person and to contract such friendships, is just as authorized by the principles of Christianity, as it is warranted to love wisdom and virtue, goodness and beneficence, and all the impresses of God upon the spirits of brave men."

"Prayer is the work of the soul, whose organs are intended for instruments of the Divine praises; and where every stop and pause of these instruments is but the conclusion of a collect, and every breathing is a prayer, then the body becomes a temple, and the soul is the sanctuary, and more private recess, and place of intercourse. Prayer is the great duty,

and the greatest privilege of a Christian; it is his intercourse with God, his sanctuary in troubles, his remedy for sins, his cure of griefs, and, as S. Gregory calls it, 'it is the principal instrument whereby we minister to God, in execution of the decrees of eternal predestination;' and those things which God intends for us, we bring to ourselves by the mediation of holy prayers. Prayer is the 'ascent of the mind to God, and a petitioning for such things as we need for our support and duty.' It is an abstract and summary of Christian religion. Prayer is an act of religion and Divine worship, confessing His power and His mercy; it celebrates His attributes, and confesses His glories, and reveres His person, and implores His aid, and gives thanks for His blessings; it is an act of humility, condescension, and dependence, expressed in the prostration of our bodies and humiliation of our spirits; it is an act of charity, when we pray for others; it is an act of repentance, when it confesses and begs pardon for our sins, and exercises every grace according to the design of the man, and the matter of the prayer."

The extracts we have given will enable the reader to judge of the quality of Taylor's style. Before resuming our narrative of his life, we may add a few remarks on the purpose and structure of the works he composed while at Golden Grove. "The Life of Christ, or the Great Exemplar," was published in 1648. The preface is enriched by his usual

liberality of view, and rendered valuable by vigorous generalisation. It seeks to prove that the preceptive part of true religion, the moral law, as taught by nature, by Moses, and by our Lord, is in all its parts absolutely "reasonable;" in other words, eminently and peculiarly fitted to subserve the purpose for which man was made, of "living happily." The work itself is thoroughly practical; it elucidates the lessons taught by the labours and character of Christ, and applies them to the reader's benefit. Chronological order is not strictly preserved, and Taylor wrote before the "destructive criticism" had been applied to the narrative of the Gospels. Defects of plan might easily be pointed out, and sometimes topics of comparative unimportance occupy an undue space; but such faults as these are forgotten in the beauty and splendour of the composition as a whole, and the spiritual insight, the knowledge of the human heart, and the deep pathos exhibited in particular passages.

Of the "Holy Living and Dying," the most popular of Taylor's works, and probably the most popular (as it seems to us incomparably the best) of all English devotional works, it is unnecessary, and it would be presumptuous, to speak in praise. How many hearts have found consolation in its pages! How many consciences have they roused! how many souls have they lifted up and exalted! When John Wesley had read the chapter on "Purity of Intention," he was so touched, so overcome, that immediately he resolved to dedicate all

his life to God, all his thoughts, and words, and actions; "being thoroughly convinced that there was no medium, but that every part of life must either be a sacrifice to God or himself." It has been well said that the "Holy Living and Dying" are the "Paradise Lost and Regained" of devotional literature; with their sublime strain softened by the simpler beauty of the Christian "Allegro and Penseroso." With Keble we are ready to say, "*Audiamus jam illum bene beateque vivendi ac moriendi Antistitem.*" To the sick, the despondent, the weary, the broken spirit, the fainting heart, the trusting soul, the blitheness of youth, the contentedness of old age, the aspiration of manhood, they bring a blessing and a balm. In these wonderful pages Taylor speaks as if his lips had been touched with a live coal from the altar of God. They glow with light and warmth; the sunshine of heaven irradiates them; the music of the angels seems to be echoed in each melodious period. "All images of rural delight; the rose and the lily; the lark at heaven's gate; the various accidents of sun and shade; the shadows of trees, the gilding of clouds, the murmuring of waters—whatever charms the eye, or comforts the heart, or enchants the ear, is collected in these pictures of the religious character." The surpassing excellence of Taylor's manual is most clearly seen when it is compared with the devotional treatises of the Romish Church; and the comparison is further interesting from the light it reflects on the sober teaching and elevated religious practice of the

Church of England. For with all Taylor's sweetness, there is no effeminacy; with all his strictness of discipline, no asceticism. If he appeals to the intellect, to the understanding, he appeals also to the heart and the soul. He is always practical and genuine; his earnestness never evaporates into a dreamy enthusiasm. The keynote of his rules of life is found in this one sentence, which only an English Churchman could have written: "God hath given every man work enough to do, that there should be no room for idleness, and yet hath so ordered the world that there shall be place for devotion. He that hath the fewest businesses in the world, is called upon to spend more time in the dressing of his soul; and he that has the most affairs, may so order them that they shall be a service of God."

In the preface to the volume of Prayers which he entitled "The Golden Grove," Taylor expressed with warmth and freedom his regret at the overthrow of the Church of England, and lavished his love upon her "sacraments so adorned and administered" and her "circumstances of religion so useful and apt for edification." With equal warmth and freedom he expressed his opinion of the arbitrary and un-Christian conduct of the Puritan preachers. In an age when few persons held Taylor's own views of religious tolerance, such language did not fail to provoke the hostility of the dominant party; and Taylor was arrested and thrown into prison. He was not long detained in confinement; but soon after his

release he seems to have given offence for a second time to the ruling powers, and he was committed to Chepstow Castle. He appears to have been treated with the consideration due to his character and sacred office; "the gentlemen under whose custody I am," he writes, "as they are careful of their charges, so they are civil to my person." In his captivity he was not idle, but added twenty-five discourses to the collection previously published, and produced his "Unum Necessarium: or, The Doctrine and Practice of Repentance, describing the Necessities and Measures of a Strict, a Holy, and a Christian Life, and rescued from Popular Errors." The latter work involved him in fresh troubles. It attacked the Calvinistic doctrine of Original Sin, and presented a view of this and further orthodox dogmas, which brought down upon him not only the anger of the Calvinistic and Puritan theologians, but the censure of some of the Catholic divines of his own Church. The moderate Warner, Bishop of Rochester, expressed his disapproval; while the admirable Sanderson complained, with much warmth, and even with tears, of Taylor's departure from the cautious and Scriptural decision of the Church of England, bewailing, with a sad forgetfulness of the fine reasoning of the "Liberty of Prophesying," the misery of the times which did not admit of suppressing by authority "so perilous and unseasonable novelties." Taylor's theories have been traced to his dislike of the Augustinian doctrines, and are probably received with more favour in the present

the hospitality of Saye's Court. In 1657, Evelyn granted him a pension, which must have been very welcome; "since he was sorely inconvenienced by the *res angustæ domi*, and suffered much from family troubles, losing two of his sons through an attack of small pox."

In 1658, the Earl of Conway, another of Taylor's powerful friends, induced him, with the help of Evelyn, to accept a lectureship at Lisburn, or as it was then called, Lisnagarvy, in the north of Ireland. As the stipend was not considerable, and the duty had to be shared by a Presbyterian, Taylor at first had hesitated; but in the summer of the same year he left England, and settled with his family at Portmore, about eight miles distant from Lisburn. Here, under the shadow of Lord Conway's stately mansion, in full view of the picturesque expanse of Lough Neagh, and in the heart of scenes "where a painter, a poet, or a devout contemplatist might alike delight to linger," Taylor took up his final abode. Its sweetness and privacy proved congenial to him. "My retirement in this solitary place," he wrote to Evelyn, "hath been, I hope, of some advantage to me as to this state of religion, in which I am yet but a novice, but, by the goodness of God, I see fine things before me whither I am contending. It is a great, but a good work, and I beg of you to assist me with your prayers, and to obtain of God for me that I may arrive at the height of love and union with God, which is given to all those souls who are very dear to God." It is

said to have been his practice to retire for study or devotion, to some of the romantic islets which stud the shining surface of the lake.

The first-fruits of his retirement were the republication of several of his former works in folio, including "The Liberty of Prophesying," which he re-christened Σύμβολον Ἠθικο-πολεμικόν, and dedicated to Lord Hatton. In the dedication he replied to opponents who had accused him of inconsistent treatment of the Fathers, alleging that he pulled down with the one hand to build up with the other. The truth seems to be that, while accepting their authority on matters of faith and practice, he did not value it highly in questions of dogmatic theology. In 1660, he issued that great treatise of casuistical divinity, the "Ductor Dubitantium," on which he himself was inclined to ground his fame. Its object, as the title implies, was to furnish all honest and patient inquirers with such rules of duty and tests of conduct as might guide them in the "proportions of conscience." The view which now obtains, that Christian ethics are best taught by the illustration and application of general principles, has rendered much of Taylor's elaborate work comparatively obsolete; but the reader may still study with advantage the fourth chapter, in which the truth of Christianity is proved from cumulative circumstantial proof. It has been described as "one of the most splendid summaries in historical literature. Thought succeeds thought in natural and immediate evolution." A careful analysis of it has

been made by Bishop Heber, and Mr. Hallam has commented upon it with his usual judicial calmness. Dean Milman has done full justice to its merits, and Mr. Hume calls it "the greatest book on Moral Philosophy produced by the English Church." It induced Coleridge to assert that an advocate might derive more professional advantages from its pages than from all the remains of Demosthenes, Æschines, and Cicero.

The year which witnessed the publication of the "Ductor Dubitantium" witnessed also the appearance of his "Worthy Communicant," in which he sets forth the blessings to be derived from the holy receiving of the Lord's Supper, and furnishes the minister with directions for dealing with difficult cases of conscience. It has much of the affluence and fervour of Taylor's earlier writings. A striking passage is that in which he speaks of the Sacramental mystery as having been made intricate, like a doctrine of philosophy, by explanations, and difficult by the assertion and dissolution of distinctions. "So we sometimes copy a bright cloud formed into an irregular figure; which, as it is observed by unskilful and fantastic travellers, looks like a curtain to some, and as a castle to others; some tell that they saw an army with banners, and it signifies war; but another, wiser than his fellows, says it looks like a flock of sheep, and foretells plenty; and all the while it is nothing but a shining cloud, by its own mobility and the activity of a wind cast into a contingent and artificial shape: so it is in this great mystery

of our religion, in which some copy strange things which God intended not; and others see not what God hath plainly told."

The restoration of Charles II. brought no higher preferment to the greatest of English divines than the Bishopric of Down and Connor, to which he was nominated on the 6th of August, 1660. Shortly after, he was elected vice-chancellor of the University of Dublin. His consecration took place, on the 27th of January, 1661, in the Cathedral of S. Patrick; and he preached a sermon on the occasion, which, according to a contemporary, gave great satisfaction by the splendour of its style and the strength of its argument. "The whole ceremony was conducted without any confusion or the least clamour heard, save many prayers and blessings from the people, although the throng was great, and the windows throughout the whole passage of the procession, to and from the cathedral, filled with spectators." In the following April the adjacent diocese of Dromore was added to that of Down and Connor, in acknowledgment of his "virtue, wisdom, and industry." He had been previously made a privy councillor; and in May he was appointed to preach at the opening of the two Houses of Parliament.

His vigorous administration of the University of Dublin laid the foundation of the renown which down to our own time it has enjoyed; while his labours in his diocese were not less assiduous than well-directed. Having found the cathedral of Dromore in a ruinous state, he rebuilt the choir at his own expense. The

Presbyterian clergy who, during the rule of the parliament, had been intruded into the benefices of the Church, gave him no little anxiety and trouble, but gradually the majority yielded to his arguments and the influence of his character, while among the laity he was received with respect and admiration. By his celebrated sermon, *Via Intelligentiæ*, published in 1662, he proved that his adhesion to his own doctrine of tolerance was still unshaken, though he had come to see that the law of toleration can hardly be applied to those who deny its validity, or will not avail themselves of its operation.

Taylor's literary labours in 1662 comprised three sermons, dedicated to the Duchess of Ormond, and a "Discourse on Confirmation." In the following year he preached the funeral sermon of Archbishop Bramhall, and published his "Dissuasive from Popery," a work undertaken at the request of the Irish bishops, which met with immediate and extensive success. He had projected, and was actually engaged in preparing, a treatise on the Beatitudes, when, while still in the very maturity of manhood, he was seized with a mortal illness.* Symptoms of fever showed themselves on the 3rd of August, and ten days later, in the 55th year of his age, and the seventh of his episcopate, he passed away (August 13, 1667). His body was interred in the choir of the

* His constitution had probably been undermined by his grief at the misconduct of his two surviving sons, one of whom fell in a duel, and the other became involved in the excesses of the Earl of Rochester.

cathedral church of Dromore; his name lives in the hearts of all English Churchmen who can appreciate the splendour of a genius devoted to God's service, and the beauty of a holy and blameless life.

"To sum up all in a few words, says Bishop Rust, (Taylor's successor in the see of Dromoret), "this great prelate had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a counsellor, and the piety of a saint." "When the name of Jeremy Taylor," exclaims Hazlitt, "is no longer remembered with reverence, genius will have become a mockery, and virtue an empty shade." "We will venture to assert," says an Edinburgh Reviewer, "that there is in any one of the prose folios of Jeremy Taylor more fine fancy and original imagery, more brilliant conceptions and glowing expressions—more new figures, and new applications of old figures—more, in short, of the body and soul of poetry, than in all the odes and the epics that have since been produced in Europe." "He would have been too great for man," is Coleridge's conclusion, and no higher panegyric could be pronounced, "if he had not occasionally fallen below himself."

[The life of Taylor has been written by Archdeacon Bonney, and, on a very elaborate scale, by Bishop Heber. See also Bishop Rust's "Funeral Sermon;" "Jeremy Taylor; his Predecessors, Contemporaries and Successors," by R. A. Willmott; J. Hunt, "History of Religious Thought;" Principal Tulloch, "Rational Theology in England;" Hallam, "Literature of Europe;" *Edinburgh Review*, No. xxxix; Coleridge, "Literary Remains," "Aids to Reflection;" Southey, "Omniana;" Dr. Parr, "Letter to Milner;" "Masters in English Theology" (Canon Farrar); "Classic Preachers of the English Church" (Canon Barry); Croly, Wheeldon, Hughes, etc.]

BOOK III.

MARTYRS AND CONFESSORS.



WILLIAM TYNDALE.
HUGH LATIMER.
BISHOP KEN.

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

A.D. 1477—1536.

WILLIAM TYNDALE,* to whom, perhaps, the English Reformation is more directly indebted than even to Cranmer or Latimer, was born, according to some authorities, at Hunt's Court, in North Nibley, in the hundred of Berkeley, Gloucestershire; † according to others, at Melksham Court, in the same county. The date of his birth is variously given as 1477 and 1484; but the balance of evidence seems in favour of the former. His family originally belonged to the north of England, and held the barony of Tyndale. One of them, in the long contention between the White and Red Roses, fought on the Lancastrian side, and when the Yorkists triumphed, withdrew into Gloucestershire for safety, assumed another name, and married the heiress of Hunt's Court. This fortunate partisan may probably have been a kinsman of William Tyndale, who inherited at least his courage and constancy of purpose.

* The name is also spelt Tindal, Tyndall, and Tindale.

† This statement is now known to be incorrect. A John Tyndall married Alice Hunt, of Hunt's Court, whose deed of settlement, leaving the estate to her sons, is dated 1542, six years after the translator's death.

Entering the University of Oxford at an early age,* he distinguished himself there by his progress in "the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts," and especially by his mastery of Holy Writ, to the study of which his mind was singularly addicted. While a scholar of Magdalen Hall, he formed a kind of class of students and fellows of Magdalen College, instructing them in the true meaning of the Scriptures. This spiritual culture happily influenced his method of life; so that from his gentle manners and conversation he came to be esteemed and reputed a man of most virtuous disposition and unblemished conduct.

From Oxford he removed to Cambridge, where he pursued his studies with commendable diligence, and took his degree. In March, 1502, he entered into holy orders, and soon after became a friar in the monastery of Greenwich. Already he had drunk deeply of the New Learning, and begun to yearn after a reform of the Church. He had also attained some degree of acquaintance with the teaching of Luther, and his close investigation of the Scriptures had prepared him to accept it. In 1522 we find him a tutor in the household of Sir John Welch, of Little Sodbury, near Bristol, where he translated the "Enchiridion Militis" of Erasmus, and presented it to his host and hostess. This Gloucestershire knight was fond of wise converse, and kept a bountiful table, to which resorted sundry abbots, deans, and deacons, with divers other doctors

* "Brought up from a child," are the words of Foxe.

and great beneficed men. The talk was usually of the great religious movement which was then perturbing Christendom; and of Erasmus and Luther, its leaders; and of the doctrines they professed or assailed. "There Master Tindal," says Foxe, "as he was most learned and practised in God's matters, so he spared not to show unto them simply and plainly his judgment in matters, as he thought, and when as they at any time did vary from Tindal in opinions and judgment, he would show them in the Book, and lay plainly before them the open and manifest places of the Scriptures, to confute their errors, and confirm his sayings. And thus continued they for a certain season, reasoning and contending together divers and sundry times, till at length they waxed weary, and bore a secret grudge in their hearts against him."

His outspoken opinions were so unacceptable to the priests, and his habit of preaching in the surrounding villages gave them such keen offence, that they privately accused him to the bishop's officials of heresy. The chancellor summoned him before him, and, as may well be supposed, gave him no very courteous reception. "He threatened him grievously, reviling and rating him as though he had been a dog," but took no further action. Tyndale returned to Sir John Welch's house.* The malice of the

* Foxe relates an anecdote which shows how widely extended were the principles of the Reformation even before the papal supremacy was openly disowned: "There dwelt not far off a certain doctor (that had been an old chancellor before to a bishop), who had been of old familiar acquaintance with Tindal, and also

priests, however, pursued him still; and, to escape from their persecution, he repaired to London. There he preached awhile. Remembering that Cuthbert Tunstall, then Bishop of London, was the friend of Erasmus* and More, and supposed to affect the New Learning, he addressed him a letter, soliciting to be taken into his employment, but obtained no favourable response. He continued in London for nearly a twelvemonth, with keen, observant eye scrutinizing the manners and morals of the priesthood, and the worldly pomp with which the bishops surrounded themselves. The work he had set himself to do was to translate into English the New Testament; and it was for this purpose he had sought the patronage of Tunstall. But finding that there was "no room for him in the bishop's house," and, indeed, no secure shelter for him in all England, he obtained assistance from some good men,† and set out for Germany; where, "being

favoured him well; unto whom Tindal went and opened his mind upon divers questions of the Scripture: for to him he durst be bold to disclose his heart. Unto whom the doctor said—'Do you not know that the Pope is very Anti-Christ, whom the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say, for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life;' and said, moreover, 'I have been an officer of his; but I have given it up, and defy him and all his works.'"

* Tunstall is highly extolled by Erasmus; he was a good scholar.

† Among these benefactors was Alderman Humphrey Monmouth, in whose house he had resided for about six months. The alderman allowed him £10 yearly to pray for the souls of his father and mother; and speaks of him as "studying both night and day," eating only "sodden meat," drinking "small single beer,"

inflamed with a tender care and zeal of his country, he refused no travail nor diligence, how, by all means possible, to reduce his brethren and countrymen to the same taste and understanding of God's holy word and verity, which the Lord had endued him withal." (A.D. 1523-4.)

Tyndale, in the course of 1525, travelled into Saxony, where he was warmly received by Luther, under whose direction he completed his translation of the Gospel and Epistles. Lee, King Henry's almoner, afterwards Archbishop of York, was then at Bordeaux, and obtaining intelligence of Tyndale's doings, addressed a letter of warning to his sovereign. "At the solicitation and instance of Luther," he says, not being in possession of *all* the truth, "with whom he is, an Englishman, your subject, hath translated the New Testament into English; and within five days intendeth to return with the same imprinted into England. I need not to advertise your grace what infection and danger may come hereby if it be not withstood. This is the next way to fulfil your realm with Lutherism. For all Luther's perverse opinions be grounded upon bare words of Scripture, not well taken, or understood, which your Grace hath opened in sundry places of your royal book. All our forefathers, governors of the Church of England, hath with all diligence forbid and eschewed publication of English Bibles, as appeareth in constitutions provincial of

and never wearing linen. Monmouth was imprisoned a short time in the Tower for assisting Tyndale to leave the country.

the Church of England. Nowe, sire, as God hath endued your Grace with Christian courage to set forth the standard against the Philistines and to vanquish them, so I doubt not but that he will assist your Grace to prosecute and perform the same—that is, to undertread them that they shall not now lift up their heads; which they endeavour by means of English Bibles.”

Meanwhile, Tyndale had betaken himself to Cologne with his precious manuscript, and sent it to press. Ten quarto sheets were printed, when the violent opposition of the Roman divine, John Cochlaeus, compelled him to carry his types to Worms. There the work was finished (A.D. 1525).^{*} An edition of 3000 copies was printed, and immediately sent over to England. Afterwards an octavo edition was issued; the translator's name not being attached to either edition. The version is made from the original Greek; and not from the Vulgate, or Luther's German translation. Two copies are still extant; one in the library of S. Paul's, the other in that of the Baptist college, Bristol.

As soon as Bishop Tunstall discovered that Tyndale's New Testaments were circulating in England, he issued a prohibition against them, commanding all who possessed copies to deliver them up, within thirty days, under penalty of excommunication. At the suggestion of the primate, the bishop subscribed a fund for buying them up before

^{*} The printer was Peter Schoeffer, second son of Peter Schoeffer, of Mentz, the son-in-law and partner of Füst. He had embraced the principles of Luther.

they left Antwerp, where Tyndale had settled, and was actively at work; and large numbers were also collected by the police. In these ways a huge pile accumulated, which was made the occasion of a solemn *auto-da-fé*. This strange ceremony took place on the morning of Shrove Sunday (A.D. 1527), when a long procession wound its way from Fleet prison to S. Paul's Cathedral. It was escorted by the warden of the Fleet, the knight-marshal, the tipstaffs, and all the company they could assemble, armed with bills and glaives; and included six men, clothed in penitential dresses, one carrying a lighted taper of five pounds' weight, the others bundles of faggots—signifying to the spectators the fate which their crime, that of circulating Tyndale's New Testaments, had merited. They reached S. Paul's at eight o'clock. The interior of the vast edifice was filled with an excited crowd, occupying every seat and bench. In the centre of the nave rose a platform, supporting the gorgeous throne of Cardinal Wolsey, who sat, attended by eighteen bishops, and as many mitred abbots and priors, all appareled in their sumptuous robes; while below them were ranged the chaplains and spiritual doctors, in gowns of damask and satin. Opposite, over the north door of the cathedral, was erected a great crucifix, the famous "Rood of Northen;" and at the foot of it, inside a rail, crackled and burned a huge fire, with the condemned Testaments and other publications piled up in baskets round it.

The prisoners, on entering, were led up to a second

platform which faced the cardinal's throne, and rendered them visible to all the people. Kneeling, with the faggots on their shoulders, they implored God and the Holy Catholic Church to forgive them their high crimes and offences. After they had made confession, Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preached a sermon; and the sermon over, Barnes, one of the criminals, turned to the onlookers, and assured them that he was more charitably handled than he deserved, considering the heinous matter of his heresies. Then the knight-marshal conducted him and his companions to the fire which blazed beneath the crucifix. They were taken within the rail, and thrice they marched round the burning pile, casting in their faggots as they passed. The prohibited books—the copies of God's Holy Word—were heaped upon the faggots, and allowed to burn to tinder. No further sacrifice was at this time insisted upon. The Church was satisfied with the insult offered to the written revelation of its Divine Master! Fisher pronounced the prisoners absolved, and received back into communion.

With the money spent by the bishops in buying up his Testaments, Tyndale was enabled to maintain a printing press in Antwerp; and, assisted by John Frith, who afterwards suffered for the Faith, he prepared a series of books designed to popularize in England the teaching of Luther and Melancthon. These were spread through the country by the exertions of a body of London Protestants who had organized themselves into an association for the

purpose, and at the hazard of their lives carried on their heroic work. The thirst of the people for this "strange lernynge" was not to be baffled by the threats of Archbishop Warham or Cardinal Wolsey; and copies of the New Testament came "thick and threefold" into England.* "It cannot be spoken," says Foxe, "what a door of light they opened to the eyes of the whole English nation, which before were many years shut up in darkness."

In 1528 Tyndale published his "Obedience of a Christian Man," in which he set forth the duties of a believer in Christ with great earnestness, and in clear nervous English; and pleaded strongly for the free and unrestrained circulation of the Scriptures. His other compositions include: "A Pathway into the Holy Scripture;" "A Protestation on the Resurrection of the Body;" "A Prologue upon the Epistle to the Romans;" "A Prologue upon the Epistle to the Galatians;" "A Prologue upon the second Epistle of S. Peter;" "A Prologue upon the Epistle of S. James;" "The Parable of the Wicked Mammon;" "A Prologue to an Exposition upon Matthew v., vi., and vii.;" "A Prologue to the Book of Jonah;" "An Exposition on the first Epistle of S. John;" and "An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue," in reply to that great statesman's attacks upon the Lutheran "heresy." These works display the same prominent characteristics; an ardent love of truth, a profound religious feeling, a

* Between 1525 and 1566, Tyndale's New Testament went through forty editions.

remarkable power of working out an argument, great simplicity and plainness of statement, and a fine, nervous, lucid style. Few writers of English have excelled Tyndale in their mastery of the language. His eloquence is stately and sonorous; rolling on with the copiousness of a mighty river. This is true of all his works, but specially true of his translation of the Bible, which to this day survives in that "Authorized Version" so justly dear to all English Christians. It has undergone revision; but substantially it is even now what Tyndale made it. "The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted—which breathes through it—the mingled tenderness and majesty—the Saxon simplicity—the preternatural grandeur—unequalled, unapproached, in the attempted improvements of modern scholars—all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man—William Tyndale."

His manner as a writer will best be understood from the following specimens:—

"Unto all such is the Scripture locked up, and made impossible to understand. They may read it and rehearse the stories thereof, and dispute of it as the Turks may, and as we may of the Turks' law. And they may suck pride, hypocrisy, and all manner of poison thereat to slay their own souls, and to put stumbling-blocks in other men's ways, to thrust them from the truth; and get such learning therein as in Aristotle's Ethics and Moral Philosophy, and in the precepts of old philosophers. But it is impossible for them to apply one sentence thereof to their

soul's health, or to fashion their lives thereby for to please God, or to make them love the law, or understand it, either to feel the power of Christ's death, and might of his resurrection, and sweetness of the life to come. So that they ever remain carnal and fleshly, as thou hast an example of the Jews, Scribes, and Pharisees, in the New Testament."

"Our deeds are evil, because we lack knowledge and love to refer them unto the glory of God. Which lack cometh of the devil that blindeth us with lusts and occasions, that we cannot see the goodness and righteousness of the law of God and the means how to fulfil it. For could we see it, and the way to do it, we should love it naturally, as a child doth a fair apple. For a child, when as a man showeth him a fair apple, and will not give it him, weepeth, so should we naturally mourn, when the members would not come forward to fulfil the law, according to the desire of our hearts. For Paul saith (2 Cor. iv.): 'If our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that perish, among which the god of this world hath blinded the wits of the unbelievers, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should not shine to them.' And Christ saith, that the birds eat up the seed sown upon the way, I interpretate by the seed, the word, and by the fowls, the devil. So that the devil blindeth us with falsehood and lies which is our worldly wisdom, and therewith stoppeth out the true light of God's wisdom, which blindness is the witness of all our deeds.

"And on the other side, that another man loveth

the laws of God, and useth the power that he hath of God well, and referreth his will and his deeds unto the honour of God, cometh of the mercy of God, which hath opened his wits, and showed him light to see the goodness and righteousness of the law of God, and the way that is in Christ to fulfil it, whereby he loveth it naturally, and trusteth to do it."

"A Christian man's heart is with the will of God, with the law and commandments of God; and hungereth and thirsteth after strength to fulfil them, and mourneth day and night, desiring God according to His promises, for to give him power to fulfil the will of God with love and trust; * these testifieth his deed that he is blessed, and that the Spirit which blesseth us in Christ, is in him, and ministereth such strength."

"Riches are the gift of God, given man to maintain the degrees of this world, and therefore not evil; yea, and some must be poor, and some rich, if we shall have an order in this world. And God our Father divideth riches and poverty among His children according to His godly pleasure and wisdom. And as riches do not exclude thee from the blessing, so doth not poverty certify thee: but to put thy trust in the living God makest thee heir thereof. For if thou trust in the living God; then, if thou be poor, thou covetest not to be rich, for thou art certified that thy Father shall minister unto thee food and raiment, and be thy defender; and if thou have riches, thou knowest that they are but vanity,

* Desire, liking.

and that as thou broughtest them not into the world, so shalt thou not carry them out; and that as they be thine to-day, so may they be another man's to-morrow, and that the favour of God only, both gave and also keepeth thee and them, and not thy wisdom or power; and that they, neither aught else, can help at need, save the good will of thy heavenly Father only. Happy and blessed then are the poor in spirit; that is to say the rich, that have not their confidence nor consolation in the vanity of their riches; and the poor, that desire not inordinately to be rich, but have their trust in the living God for food and raiment, and for all that pertaineth either to the body or the soul; 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'"

"Concerning the goods of this world, it is easy to judge. In the first state, or degree, thou oughtest to be thankful to Christ, and to love, to give, and to lend to them that are bought with His precious blood all that thou art able. For all that thou owest to Christ, whose servant thou art to do His will, that must thou pay them. And that thou dost to them, that same thou dost to Christ, and that thou art not ready to do for them, that denieth thou to do for Christ. But and if any of thy brethren will withhold, or take away by force, above that thou mayst spare, by the reason of some office, that thou hast in the second state, or invade thee violently, and lay more on thy back than thou canst bear: then hold thine heart and hand, that thou neither hate nor smite, and speak fair and lovingly,

and let neighbours go between. And when thou hast proved all means of love in vain, then complain to the law, and the officer, that is set to be thy father, and [to] defend thee, and to judge between thee and thy brother."

Teaching less subversive of established order, less antagonistic to authority, or less related to dogmatic controversies, it would be hard to find; and for us of the nineteenth century it is necessarily difficult to understand the violent spirit of opposition which it provoked on the part of the English prelates.

One more quotation is all that our limited space will permit to us.

"Christ warned His disciples at His last supper to have peace in Him, affirming that they should have none in the world. The false prophets shall even impugn the faith in Christ's blood, and enforce to quench the true understanding of the law, and the right meaning and intent of all the works commanded by God, which fight is a fight above all fights. First, they shall be in such number, that Christ's true disciples shall be but a small flock in respect of them; they shall have works like Christ, as that fasting, prayer, poverty, obedience, and chastity shall be the names of their profession. For as S. Paul saith to the Corinthians, the angels or messengers of Satan shall change themselves into angels or messengers of light and truth. They shall come in Christ's name, and with signs and miracles, and have the upper hand also, even to deceive the

very elect, if it were possible. Yea, and beyond all this, if thou get the victory of the false prophets, and pluck a multitude out of their hands, there shall immediately arise of the same, and set up a new false sect against thee. And against all these Amalekites, the only remedy is to lift up the hands of thy heart to God in continual prayer. Which hands, if thou for weariness once let fall, thou goest to the worse immediately. Then beside the fight and conflict of the subtle sophistry, false miracles, disguised and hypocritical works of these false prophets, come the dogs and wolves of their disciples with the servants of Mammon, and the swine of thine own scholars ; against which all thou hast no other shield or defence, but prayer. Then the sin and lusts of thine own flesh, Satan, and a thousand temptations unto evil in the world, will either drive thee to the castle and refuge of prayer, or take thee prisoner undoubtedly."

In 1529, Tyndale issued a fifth edition of his New Testament, and began to print the first four books of the Old. The Book of Deuteronomy he desired to put to press at Hamburg, and for this purpose embarked on the voyage thither ; but his ship being wrecked on the coast of Holland, he lost all his manuscripts, copies, and writings, and so was compelled "to begin all anew again, to his hindrance and doubling of his labours." In a second venture he was more fortunate, and reached Hamburg in safety. There, as had been agreed between them, he was joined by Miles Coverdale (Bishop of

Exeter), who assisted him in re-translating the Book of Deuteronomy.

Many efforts were made by Tyndale's enemies to entice him from the asylum he had found at Antwerp. But he was well aware of the anger Henry VIII. had manifested at the publication of his "Practice of Prelates" (printed at Marburg in 1530), and was on his guard against plot and intrigue. The martyrdom of John Frith (July 4, 1533) warned him of the fate he might expect if he fell into hostile hands. To this fellow-labourer in the cause of Christ, while lying in his dungeon in the Tower, Tyndale wrote some words of faithful encouragement, which sprang from the constancy of his own brave heart.

"Dearly beloved," he wrote, "be of good courage, and comfort your soul with the hope of a high reward, and bear the image of Christ in your mortal body, that it may at His coming be made like to His immortal; and follow the example of all your other dear brethren, which chose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say against that nothing. Stick at necessary things, and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, saying, they find none but that will abjure rather than suffer the extremity. . . . 'Una salus victis, nullam sperare salutem,' that is, to look for no man's help, bringeth the help of God to them that seem to be overcome in the eyes of the hypocrites; yea, it shall make God to carry you through thick and thin, for His truth's sake, in

spite of all the enemies of His truth. There falleth not a hair till his [its] hour be come ; and when his hour is come, necessity carrieth us hence, though we be not willing. But if we be willing, then have we a reward and thank.

“Fear not the threatening, therefore, neither be overcome of sweet words; with which twain the hypocrite shall assail you. Neither let the persuasions of worldly wisdom bear rule in your heart; no, though they be your friends that counsel you. Let not their visor beguile your eyes. Let not your body faint. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. If the pain be above your strength, remember: ‘Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it you.’ And pray to your Father in that name, and He shall ease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith be with you. Amen.

“Two have suffered in Antwerp unto the great glory of the Gospel; four at Rysels in Flanders; and at Luke hath there one at the least suffered, and all the same day. At Rouen, in France, they persecute; and at Paris are five doctors taken for the Gospel. See, you are not alone; be cheerful, and remember, that among the hard-hearted in England, there is a number reserved by grace; for whose sakes, if need be, you must be ready to suffer. Sir, if you may write, how short soever it may be, forget it not, that we may know how it goeth with you, for our heart’s ease. The Lord be yet again with you, with all His plenteousness, and fill you that you flow over. Amen.

"If when you have read this, you may send it to Adrian, do, I pray you, that he may know how that our heart is with you.

"George Joy, at Candlemas, being at Barrow, printed two leaves of Genesis, in a great form, and sent one copy to the king, and another to the new queen [Anne Boleyn], with a letter to N. for to deliver them; and to purchase licence, that he might so go through all the Bible. Out of this sprang the work of the new Bible; and out of that is the great seeking for English books at all printers and bookbinders in Antwerp, and for an English priest that should print.

"This chanced the 9th day of May.

"Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not for her sake have the glory of God hindered."

After the martyrdom of Frith, Tyndale employed himself on a revision of his New Testament, "which I have looked over again with all diligence," he says in the preface, "and compared with the Greek, and weeded out of it many faults." Meantime, a spy of the name of Philips, son of a custom-house officer at Poole, was employed by the English bishops to compass the ruin of this Christian scholar. By professing a deep regard for him and his work he gained his confidence; and of this confidence he foully took a traitor's advantage. Upon a warrant procured in Brussels Tyndale was apprehended, and removed to the castle of Vilvorde, about eighteen miles from the capital, where he lay in captivity for

more than a year and a half.* Pointz, the merchant who had sheltered him, used every exertion to obtain his pardon from Henry VIII. and the Emperor Charles; but, after the usual series of disputations and examinations, the Roman Catholic tribunal pronounced him "a heretic," and an imperial decree adjudged him to suffer death by fire. On Friday, October 6th, 1536, he was conveyed to the place of execution, where he was bound to the stake, strangled, and his body burned to ashes. His last words were: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." He did not die in vain. In the following year, the Bible was published throughout England, by royal command, and a copy for the free use of all who could read was placed in every English church.

The general testimony of Tyndale's contemporaries confirms the statement of Foxe that he was a man of very simple and frugal living, spare of body, an enthusiastic student, and a fervent labourer in the setting forth of the Scriptures of God. Two days in the week, namely Monday and Saturday, he reserved to himself as his "days of pastime." The Monday he spent in visiting the poor men and women whom persecution had driven from England; and who had found a refuge in Antwerp. Making himself acquainted with their "good exercises and qualities," he comforted and relieved them with exceeding liberality. In like manner he provided for the sick

* The only one of Tyndale's letters now extant, in his own handwriting, was written by him in his captivity. It was discovered by Mr. Demaus among the Belgian archives.

and distressed. On the Saturday he walked about the city, seeking "every hole and corner" where he suspected any poor person to reside; and the aged and weak, or those "overburdened with children," did not fail to experience his abundant generosity. It was thus that he spent his two days of pastime. "And truly," says Foxe, "his alms were very large and great, and so they well might be; for his exhibition that he had yearly of the English merchants at Antwerp (to whom he acted as chaplain), was very much, and that for the most part he bestowed upon the poor." The remainder of the week he devoted to his work of translation and exposition; a work which largely contributed to give the English Reformation that direction it finally took.

"When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber or other, whither came many other merchants; and unto them would he read some one parcel of Scripture, the which proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly, and gently from him (much like to the writing of S. John the Evangelist), that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the Scriptures. And likewise after dinner, he spent an hour in the aforesaid manner. He was a man," adds Foxe, "without any spot or blemish of rancour or malice, full of mercy and compassion, so that no man living was able to reprove him of any kind of sin or crime; albeit, his righteousness and justification depended not thereupon before God, but only upon

the blood of Christ, and his faith upon the same ; in the which faith constantly he died, and now resteth with the glorious company of Christ's martyrs, blessedly in the Lord, who be blessed in all His saints. Amen."

[See "Foxe's Acts and Monuments;" Bale; Richmond's "Fathers of the English Church;" Froude, "History of England;" Christopher Anderson, "Annals of the English Bible;" Z. Demaus, "William Tyndale: a Biography;" and F. Fry, "A Bibliographical Description of the Editions of the New Testament, Tyndale's Version," etc.]

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HUGH LATIMER, BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

A.D. 1491—1555.

OF the three prominent figures in the English Reformation, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, it is the last which most strongly excites our interest. Cranmer, from his official position, is the most conspicuous ; but there is much that is unattractive in his character, in its timidity, its vacillation, its want of a strong individuality. Bishop Ridley was wise of counsel, deep of wit, benevolent in spirit. We cannot but admire his calm courage, his modesty, his gentleness of disposition. Latimer it is, however, who chiefly engages our sympathies ; there was such a rough force and energy about the man, such a breadth of view, so much geniality of humour, such a directness of aim, such an inflexibility of purpose. It has justly been said of him that he was in heart and mind a man of the people, and of all the English bishops "the most influenced and led by popular feeling." Both in what he was, and what he was not, Latimer was eminently English. Sagacious, straightforward,

practical, he was content to make the best of what he had, and to build up something that would stand and endure, without troubling himself about ideal perfection or theoretical harmony. The same practical spirit breathes through his sermons. They are full of shrewd observations, couched in plain and forcible language; of a happy common sense and cheery humour; of an unaffected simplicity and candour; but never rise to any high pitch of eloquence, nor are they distinguished by any profundity of thought. But the complete harmony between Latimer's life and teaching, between his sermons and his conduct, is very noticeable. He was always the same; always in earnest; always impatient of wrong; always indignant against oppression; always anxious that the truth should prevail and be glorified. He was "one of the most fearless men who ever lived." No power of evil or of authority could frighten him into silence. "Like John Knox, whom," says Mr. Froude, "he much resembled, in whatever presence he might be, whether of poor or rich, of laymen or priests, of bishops or kings, he ever spoke out boldly from his pulpit what he thought, directly, if necessary, to particular persons whom he saw before him respecting their own actions." These qualities it is which have perpetuated the popularity of Latimer to our own time; so that he is a well-known figure to many whose conception of Cranmer or Ridley is of the vaguest. And these are the qualities which make his sermons still readable and profitable, and have pre-

served for them a place by the side even of those of Jeremy Taylor, South, and Barrow.

In mere intellectual strength, Latimer is the inferior of Luther and Calvin, as in the graces of scholarship he is of the great Anglican divines already named. He had no imagination, no foresight of intellect, no creative or constructive power. He does not excel in any department of intellectual action. He is not a profound theologian. We read his sermons, as Principal Tulloch remarks, "not for any light or reach of truth which they unfold, nor because they exhibit any peculiar depth of spiritual apprehension, but simply because they are interesting—and interesting mainly from the very absence of all dogmatic or intellectual pretensions . . . There is a proportion of vigour, not of logic, but of sense and feeling in them eminently English, and showing everywhere a high and well-toned capacity. He is coarse and low at times; his familiarity occasionally descends to meanness; but the living hold which he takes of reality at every point, often carries him also to the height of an indignant and burning eloquence."

A few extracts from his discourses will better exhibit their peculiar features than any amount of criticism. They will show, too, that he hated vice rather than error, and had more toleration for mistakes of opinion than faults of conduct. The discourses handed down to us are twenty-eight in number, namely, two on the Card (suggested by a then popular game of cards, called the Triumph),

preached about 1529; one on the epistle for the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity, 1535; two preached before the Convocation of the Clergy, 1536; the celebrated sermon of the Plough, 1548; seven preached before Edward the Sixth, 1549; the last sermon preached before Edward the Sixth, 1550; one preached at Stamford, 1550; seven on the Lord's Prayer, 1552; one on the gospel for SS. Simon and Jude's day, 1552; and five preached in Lincolnshire, 1552.

THE CHRISTIAN CONFLICT.*

"Saith S. Paul, 'we have not wrestling or strife against flesh and blood,' which may be understood against certain sins, which come of the flesh only; but let us take it as it standeth, 'against flesh and blood,' that is, against any corporal man, which is but a weak thing in comparison, and with one stroke destroyed or slain; but we have to do with strong, mighty princes and potentates; that mighty prince, that great conqueror of the world, the devil, yea, a conqueror; for, though our Saviour Jesus Christ conquered him and all his, by suffering His blessed passion, yet is he a great conqueror in this world, and reigneth over a great multitude of his own, and maketh continual conflicts and assaults against the rest, to subdue them also under his power; which, if they be armed after S. Paul's teaching, shall stand strongly against his assaults. 'Our battle,' saith S. Paul, 'is against princes, potentates,' that is, against

* Bishop Latimer, "Sermons," ed. Parker Society, pp. 26, 27.

devils, for after the common opinion there fell from heaven of every order of angels, as of potentates. He saith also, against worldly rulers of these darkenesses; for, as doctors do write, the spirits that fell with Lucifer have their being in *aëre caligniore*, the air in darkness, and the rulers of this world, by God's sufferance, to hurt, vex, and assault them that live upon the earth. For their nature is, as they be damned, to desire to draw all mankind unto like damnation; such is their malice. And though they hang in the air, or fall in a garden or other pleasant place, yet have they continually their pain upon their backs. Against these we wrestle, and against spiritual wickedness in *coelestibus*, that is, in the air; for we fight against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things."

THE CHRISTIAN ARMOUR.*

"Here is the armour of God's teaching for man and woman. When a man shall go to battle, commonly he hath a great girdle, with an apron of mail going upon his knees; then he hath a breastplate; then for the nether part, he hath a high shoon; and then he must have a buckler, to keep off his enemy's strokes; then he must have a sallet wherewith his head may be saved; and, finally, he must have a sword to fight withal, and to hurt his enemy. These are the weapons that commonly men use when they go to war; of such wise S. Paul would have us to be prepared. Therefore, whosoever will

* "Sermons," p. 409.

go to this spiritual war, and fight against the devil, he must have such weapons, truth, justice, and be ready to hear God's word. They that be armed in such wise, the devil can nothing do against them; as it appeared in the holy man Job, whom the devil could not tempt further than he had leave of God. Whereby we gather, that when we stand in God's armour, we shall be able to quench the assaults of this old serpent the devil."

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.*

"I will tell you an example of this, how God giveth mouth and wisdom. I was once in examination before five or six bishops, when I had much turmoiling. Every week thrice I came to examinations, and many snares and traps were laid to get something. Now God knoweth I was ignorant of the law; but that God gave me answer and wisdom what I should speak. It was God indeed, for else I had never escaped them. At the last I was brought forth to be examined, but now at this time the chamber was somewhat altered; for whereas before there was wont ever to be a fire in the chimney, now the fire was taken away, and an arras-hanging hanged over the chimney, and the table stood near the chimney's end. There was among those bishops that examined me, one with whom I have been very familiar, and took him for my great friend, an aged man, and he sat next the table end. Then among all other questions, he put forth one, a very subtle

* "Sermons," pp. 294, 295.

and crafty one; and such one indeed as I could not think so great danger in. And when I should make answer: 'I pray you, Master Latimer,' said he, 'speak out; I am very thick of hearing, and here be many that sit far off.' I marvelled at this, that I was bidden speak out, and began to misdeem, and gave an ear to the chimney. And then I heard a pen walking in the chimney behind the cloth. They had appointed one there to write all mine answers; for they made sure work that I should not start from them. There was no starting from them; God was my good Lord, and gave me answer; I could never else have escaped it. The question was this: 'Master Latimer, do you not think on your conscience, that you have been suspected of heresy?' A subtle question, a very subtle question. There was no holding of peace would serve. To hold my peace had been to grant myself faulty. To answer it was every way full of danger. But God, which always hath given me answer, helped me, or else I could never have escaped it; and delivered me from their hands. Many one have had the like gracious deliverance, and been endued with God's wisdom and God's spirit, which all their adversaries could not be able to resist."

RESTITUTION *versus* CONTRITION.*

"I have now preached three Lents. The first time, I preached restitution. 'Restitution,' quoth some, what 'should he preach of restitution? Let

* "Sermons," pp. 262, 263.

him preach of contrition,' quoth they, 'and let restitution alone; we can never make restitution. Then, say I, if thou wilt not make restitution, thou shalt go to the devil for it. Now choose thee either restitution, or else endless damnation. But now there be two manner of restitutions; secret restitution, and open restitution; whether of both it be, so that restitution be made, it is all good enough. At my first preaching of restitution, one good man * took remorse of conscience, and acknowledged himself to me that he had deceived the king; and willing he was to make restitution; and so, the first Lent, came to my hands twenty pounds to be restored to the king's use. I was promised twenty pounds more the same Lent, but it could not be made, so that it came not. Well, the next Lent came three hundred and twenty pounds more. I received it myself, and paid it to the king's council. So I was asked, what thus made restitution? But should I have named him? Nay, they should as soon have this wesant† of mine. Well, now this Lent came one hundred and fourscore pounds ten shillings, which I have paid and delivered this present day to the king's council; and so this man hath made a godly restitution. 'And so,' quoth I, to a certain nobleman that is one of the king's council, 'if every man that hath beguiled the king should make restitution after this sort, it

* Strype says this was John Bradford, but the statement is doubtful.

† *Wesant*, or *weasand*; windpipe.

THEY WERE IN THE FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS. I
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may be richer. Let us fall to some pleasant communication; after let us go home, even as good as we came hither, that is, right-begotten children of the world, and utterly worldlings. And while we live here, let us all make true cheer (*bonne chère*). For after this life there is small pleasure, little mirth for us to hope for; if now there be nothing to be changed in our fashions. Let us say, not as S. Peter did, 'Our end approacheth nigh,' this is an heavy hearing; but let us say as the evil servant said, 'It will be long ere my master come.' This is pleasant. Let us beat our fellows; let us eat and drink with drunkards. Surely, as oft as we do not take away the abuse of things, so oft we beat our fellows. As oft as we give not the people their true food, so oft we beat our fellows. As oft as we let them die in superstition, so oft we beat them. To be short, as oft as we blind lead them blind, so oft we beat, and grievously beat our fellows. When we welter in pleasures and idleness, then we eat and drink with drunkards. But God will come, God will come, He will not tarry long away. He will come upon such a day as we nothing look for Him, and at such hour as we know not. He will come and cut us in pieces. He will reward us as He doth the hypocrites. He will set us where wailing shall be, my brethren. And let here be the end of our tragedy, if ye will. These be the delicate dishes prepared for the world's well-beloved children. These be the wafers and junkets provided for worldly prelates—wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Can there be any mirth, when these two courses last all the feast? Here we laugh, there we shall weep. Our teeth make merry here, ever dashing in delicates; there we shall be torn with teeth, and do nothing but gnash and grind our own. To what end have we now excelled others in policy? What have we brought forth at the last?"*

Hugh Latimer was born at Thurcaston in Leicestershire in the year 1490 or 1491. His father was a yeoman; of whose condition and manner of life he thus simply speaks in one of his own sermons: "My father," he says, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pound by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able and did find the king in harness, with himself and his horse, while he came to the place that he should receive the king's wages. . . . He kept me to school, else I had not been able to preach before the king's majesty now. He married my sisters with five pounds or twenty nobles a-piece; so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of the Lord. He

* This sermon was preached on Sunday, the 9th of June, 1536, in S. Paul's Cathedral. Nine-tenths of those eyes which were then fixed on the preacher "would have glistened with delight, could they have looked instead upon his burning. The whole multitude of passionate men were compelled, by a changed world, to listen quietly while he shot his bitter arrows among them."

kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor." This honest, charitable, and devout man was the worthy father of a worthy son; who, nurtured in such a household, could hardly fail to grow up in the practice of all the manly virtues. Traces of the tastes and pursuits of his childhood occur in several of his sermons. He was trained by his father to the noble pastime of crossbow-shooting, which he speaks of as "God's gift to the English nation above all other nations, and the instrument whereby He had given them many victories against their enemies." When only six or seven years of age, he helped (as he tells us) to buckle on his father's armour when he went to the field of Blackheath, on the occasion of the Cornish rebellion. "My father," he adds, "was as diligent to teach me to shoot as to learn any other thing; he taught me how to draw, how to lay my body in my bow, and not to draw with strength of arms as other nations do, but with strength of the body. I had my bows bought me according to my age and strength; as I increased in them, so my bows were made bigger and bigger; for men will never shoot well except they be brought up in it; it is a goodly art, a wholesome kind of exercise, and much commended in physic."

After receiving the elements of education in the common schools of Leicester, he was sent, at the age of fourteen, to the University of Cambridge. D'Aubigné has remarked that it was the same year in which Luther entered the Augustine convent

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But a change came over him. He made the acquaintance of Bilney—little Bilney, “that blessed martyr of God,” as he calls him—and began to imbibe his opinions. “Bilney heard me at that time,” he says, “and perceived that I was zealous without knowledge; and he came to me afterwards in my study, and desired me, for God’s sake, to hear his confession. I did so; and, to say the truth, by his confession I learned more than I did before in many years. So from that time forward I began to smell the word of God, and forsook the school doctors and such fooleries.” He devoted himself earnestly to pastoral work, and actively visited the sick, and the prisoners in the Tower of Cambridge. “Whereas before he was an enemy, and almost a persecutor of Christ, he was now a zealous seeker after Him.” Such had Paul become; the persecutor, a confessor. His natural gifts for preaching led him to the university pulpit, where he preached mightily day by day, both in English and *ad clerum*, “to the great admiration of all men who aforetime had known him of a contrary severe opinion.” One who heard his sermons has left on record that “none except the stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart” ever “went away from his preaching without being affected with high detestation of sin, and nerved unto all godliness and virtue.” And the force of his rude, vigorous, manly eloquence was such that many were turned from their “will-works,” such as “pilgrimages and setting-up of candles,” to the works that God com-

manded expressly in His Holy Scripture, and "to the reading and study of God's word, all dreams and unprofitable glosses of men set aside and utterly despised." "I was present," says the same authority, "when with manifest authorities of God's word, and arguments invincible, besides the allegations of doctors, he proved in his sermons that the Holy Scriptures ought to be read in the English tongue of all Christian people, whether they were priests or laymen, as they be called. . . . Neither was I absent when he inveighed against temple-works, good intents, blind zeal, superstitious devotion, as the painting of tabernacles, gilding of images, setting up of candles, running on pilgrimage, and such other idle inventions of men, whereby the glory of God was obscured, and the works of mercy the less regarded. I remember also how he was wont to rebuke the beneficed men, with the authority of God's word, for neglecting and not teaching their flock, and for being absent from their cures—they themselves being idle, and musting themselves* like hogs of Epicurus's flock, taking no thought though their poor parishioners miserably pine away, starve, perish, and die for hunger. Neither have I forgotten how at that time he condemned foolish, ungodly, and impossible vows to be fulfilled. Oh how vehement was he in rebuking all sins, and how sweet and pleasant were his words in exhorting unto virtue!"

Latimer's sermons, so novel in their practical

* That is, feeding on mast (beech-nuts).

application of the living truth of Christ's religion, so forcible and direct in expression, and so vehement in their frank sincerity, fell upon the little world of Cambridge like a bolt from a clear sky. If one party were moved to enthusiasm and quickened into a fervent spiritual life, another party was not less strongly moved to indignant and violent protest. Swarms of "friars and doctors," buzzed around him; angry voices were raised against him. It was true that a new spirit of devotion animated both the university and the city; but was not this man preaching a strange and heretical doctrine? Was he not inveighing against the ministers of the Church, and shaking the very foundations of ecclesiastical order? "Satan's men-at-arms," as Foxe quaintly calls them, prevailed upon the Bishop of Ely to close the university pulpits against this dangerous reformer and unsettler of men's minds. But he was not to be foiled; and the church of the Augustine Friars being exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, he obtained leave to preach there. "Divers papists in the university" then made a "grievous complaint" to Cardinal Wolsey, who cited him to appear before him, and defend, if he could, himself and his teaching. The bold preacher repaired to London, and at York Place, the splendid cardinal's stately residence, was admitted to an interview. "Is your name Latimer?" said Wolsey. "Yes, forsooth," was the reply. "You seem," continued the cardinal, "that you are of good years, nor no babe, but one that should wisely and soberly use yourself in all

your doings; and yet it is reported to me of you that you are much infected with this new fantastical doctrine of Luther, and such-like heretics; that you do very much harm among the youths and other light heads with your doctrine." "Your grace is misinformed," replied Latimer, calmly; "for I ought to have some more knowledge than to be so simply reported of, by reason that I have studied in my time both of the ancient doctors of the Church, and also of the school doctors." "Marry, that is well said," quoth Wolsey; "Mr. Doctor Capon, and you, Mr. Doctor Marshall," (both being there present), "say you somewhat to Mr. Latimer touching some question in Duncce [Duns Scotus]." Dr. Capon obeyed; but Latimer, fresh from his scholastic studies, and gifted with great readiness and aptitude of speech, answered him so promptly, and to such effect, that he was soon completely posed. Whereupon Wolsey, who, like his royal master, knew a man when he saw him, exclaimed, "What mean you, my masters, to bring such a man before me into accusation! I had thought that he had been some light-headed fellow that never studied such kind of doctrine as the school-doctors are. I pray, thee, Latimer, tell me the cause why the Bishop of Ely and others doth mislike thy preachings; tell me the truth, and I will bear with thee upon amendment."

"Your grace must understand," said Latimer, "that the Bishop of Ely cannot favour me, for that not long ago I preached before him in Cam-

bridge a sermon of this text, '*Christus existens Pontifex*,' etc., wherein I described the office of a bishop so uprightly as I might, according to the text, that never after he could abide me; but hath not only forbidden me to preach in his diocese, but also found the means to inhibit me from preaching in the university." "I pray you tell me what thou didst preach before him upon that text." Latimer then repeated the substance of the sermon he had preached before the Bishop of Ely; and Wolsey quickly understood the true nature of the yeoman-preacher who had been brought before him. No eye more keenly detected than his the difference "between a true man and an impostor;" and no one was more willing than he that the worst abuses of the Church should be redressed. "Did you not preach?" he inquired, "any other doctrine than you have rehearsed?" "No, surely," said Latimer. "Then if the Bishop of Ely cannot abide such doctrine, you shall have my licence, and preach it unto his beard, let him say what he will." And so Latimer was dismissed, with a general licence to preach throughout England.*

Shortly after this noteworthy occurrence, Latimer preached his two sermons on the Card; sermons distinguished by their quaint terms of thought and speech, and the forcibleness of their practical exhortations. One Buckenham, friar of the Black Friars, was instigated to an audacious attempt to rival the popular preacher. About Christmas time,

* Strype, "Ecclesiastical Memorials," i. 368.

when Latimer's sermons on the Card were attracting crowds of hearers, he brought out his "Christmas Dice," "casting them to his audience *cinq*ue and *quat*uor," and endeavouring, by some strained and over-elaborate play upon the dice, to prove that the vulgar should not be allowed to read the Scriptures in English. His arguments against this concession would nowadays provoke a shout of derision; as, for instance, that the ploughman, on reading that "no man that layeth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is worthy of the kingdom of God," might abandon his ploughing; and the baker, when told that "a little barm corrupteth a whole lump," might leave his bread unleavened. Among Buckenham's hearers was Latimer himself, and a day or two later, he replied to his would-be imitator with crushing effect. The friar, in his turn, was a listener; and "a great multitude, as well of the university as of the town, met with great expectation to hear what would be said." They were well repaid. Latimer's strong, broad, and manly humour found in the friar's conceits a peculiarly apt subject. After exposing their emptiness, he indulged in a keen retort. The Biblical imagery, he said, was as easily understood as the most common representation by the painter's brush, such as decorated the walls of houses or churches. "For example," he said, "when they paint a fox preaching out of a friar's cowl, none is so mad to take this to be a fox that preacheth, but know well enough the meaning of the matter, which is to point out unto us what hypocrisy.

craft, and subtle dissimulation lieth hid many times in these friars' cowls, telling us thereby to beware of them." Buckenham was "so dashed" with this sharp sarcasm, that he never after "durst peep out of the pulpit against Master Latimer."*

On all points of theoretic belief, Latimer was still in accordance with the orthodoxy of the time. His practical mind cared little for doctrinal speculation, and he was slow, as Froude remarks, in arriving at conclusions which had no immediate bearing upon action. But his uncompromising attacks on folly and wickedness in high places were as gall and wormwood to some of the authorities in the university; and a fierce controversy arose, which at last attracted the notice of the court. Dr. Fox, the king's almoner, and provost of King's College, was instructed, therefore, to inform the vice-chancellor that unless the university put a stop to the strife, the king himself would interfere. Accordingly, the vice-chancellor appointed a day on which any person who had aught to allege against Master Latimer, should prefer his charge, that it might be duly heard, and justice done. Latimer's opponents, shrinking from this challenge, the vice-chancellor, on January 29, 1530, summoned "Master Latimer, Masters Bayor, Bryganden, Grimwood, and Mr. Proctor of the Black Friars," before him and the senate; and strictly commanded both parties, on pain of excommunication, to abstain from dealing with controversial subjects in the pulpit; and also to

* Foxe, "Acts," book xi.

avoid the use of expressions, either in their sermons or their conversation, which might give each other offence.*

In the following month, Latimer was one of the persons appointed by the university to determine the question of the lawfulness of King Henry's marriage with his brother's widow, Catherine of Arragon; and he gave his opinion in favour of the king's divorce. The decision of the university was announced on the 9th of March; and on the Sunday following, Latimer, who had already been marked out by the king, preached in the royal presence at Windsor. Henry, it is said, "greatly praised Master Latimer's sermon," and the preacher was rewarded with a gift of five pounds. Returning to Cambridge, he continued his active pastoral work until selected as one of the twelve of "the best learned men" within the university, who, in obedience to a royal mandate, met in London with the same number of divines from Oxford, to offer their counsel and judgment concerning certain printed books then in general circulation. The result of their discussions was the preparation of an "instrument for the abolishing and inhibiting of the Scripture and divers other books, to be read in English," to which effect was given by a royal proclamation. It is certain, however, that Latimer disapproved of both the instrument and the proclamation. He himself expressly states that the former did not express the views of all the divines, but that three or four would

* Lamb, "Letters," etc., pp. 14-16.

have had the Scripture "to go forth in English;" and in a letter to the king, dated the 1st of December, he pleaded strongly and eloquently "for the restoring again of the free liberty of reading" God's word.

With all Henry's faults he had manliness enough to respect an honest speaker, and Latimer was appointed one of the royal chaplains. This necessitated his removal to Windsor, where he preached often, and with as much freedom and plainness of expression as he had used in Cambridge. Henry took no offence at the preacher's candour, but some of Henry's courtiers did. "I was once," says Latimer, "offended with the king's horses, and therefore took occasion to speak in the presence of the king's majesty. . . . Abbeys were ordained for the benefit of the poor: wherefore, I said, it was not decent that the king's horses should be kept in them, as many were at that time; the living of poor men thereby diminished and taken away. But afterwards a certain nobleman said to me, 'What hast thou to do with the king's horses?' I answered and said, 'I spake my conscience, as God's word directed me.' He said, 'Horses be the maintenance and part of a king's honour, and also of his realm; wherefore in speaking against them, ye are against the king's honour.' I answered, 'God teacheth what honour is decent for the king, and for all other men according unto their vocations. God appointed every king a sufficient living for his state and degree, both by lands and other customs; and it is lawful for any king to enjoy

the same goods and possessions. But to extort and take away the right of the poor, is against the honour of the king.”* Again, he says: “There was a certain man that, shortly after my first sermon, being asked if he had been at the sermon that day, answered, ‘Yea.’ ‘I pray you,’ said he, ‘how liked you him?’ ‘Marry,’ said he, ‘sure as I liked him always; a seditious fellow.’ Oh, Lord! he pinched me there, indeed; nay, he had rather a full bite at me. Yet I comfort myself with that, that Christ Himself was noted to be a stirrer up of the people against the emperor; and was contented to be called seditious.”†

In the sermon from which our last quotation is taken occurs a remarkable passage: “In the king’s days a many of us were called together before him to say our minds in certain matters. In the end, one kneeleth me down, and accuseth me of sedition, that I had preached seditious doctrine. A heavy salutation, and a hard point of such a man’s doing, as if I should name him, ye would not think it. The king turned to me and said, ‘What say you to that, sir?’ Then I kneeled down, and turned me first to mine accuser, and required him, ‘Sir, what form of preaching would you appoint me to preach before a king? Would you have me for to preach nothing as concerning a king in a king’s sermon? Have you any commission to appoint me what I shall preach?’ Besides this, I asked him divers other questions, and he would make no answer to none of them all: he

* “Sermons,” p. 93.

† *Ibid.*, p. 134.

had nothing to say. Then I turned me to the king, and submitted myself to his grace, and said: 'I never thought myself worthy, nor I never sued to be a preacher before your grace, but I was called to it, and would be willing, if you mislike me, to give place to my betters; for I grant there be a great many more worthy of the room than I am. And if it be your grace's pleasure so to allow them for preachers, I could be content to bear their books after them. But if your grace allow me for a preacher, I would desire your grace to give me leave to discharge my conscience; give me leave to frame my doctrine according to mine audience. I had been a very dolt to have preached so at the borders of your realm, as I preach before your grace.' And I thank Almighty God, which hath always been my remedy, that my sayings were well accepted of the king; for, like a gracious lord, he turned unto another communication. It is even as the Scripture saith, *Cor regis in manu Domini*, 'The Lord directed the king's heart.' Certain of my friends came to me with tears in their eyes, and told me they looked I should have been in the Tower the same night."*

In the persecution which raged against the disciples of the reformed faith in 1530, Henry acquiesced. Yet Latimer had the courage to throw himself between the spoilers and their prey, and to address to the king a vigorous remonstrance against the injustice that was being done to some of his loyal subjects. The manly independence of its

* "Sermons," p. 105.

tone may be inferred from the concluding paragraphs:—

“I pray to God that your grace may take heed of the worldly wisdom which is foolishness before God; that you may do that [which] God commandeth, and not that [which] seemeth good in your own sight, without the Word of God; that your grace may be found acceptable in His sight, and one of the members of His Church; and, according to the office that He hath called your grace unto, you may be found a faithful minister of His gifts, and not a defender of His faith; for He will not have it defended by man or man’s power, but by His Word only, by the which He hath evermore defended it, and that by a way far above man’s power or reason.

“Wherefore, gracious king, remember yourself; have pity, upon your soul; and think that the day is near at hand when you shall give account for your office, and of the blood that hath been shed by your sword. In which day, that your grace may stand steadfastly, and not be ashamed, but be clear and ready in your reckoning, and have (as they say) your *quietus est*, sealed with the blood of our Saviour Christ, which only saveth at that day, is my daily prayer to Him that suffered death for our sins, which also prayeth to His Father for grace for us, continually; to whom be all honour and praise for ever. Amen. The Spirit of God preserve your grace.”*

It may be questioned whether we have had many

* Latimer, “Remains,” etc., pp. 308, 309.

divines with the courage to address their king so frankly, or many kings with the magnanimity to receive so frank an address without anger. Yet, in the following year, Latimer, being anxious to retire from court, the atmosphere of which did not suit him, the king generously bestowed on him the benefice of West Kingston, in Wiltshire. To this quiet town Latimer retired for a little rest. But *his* rest would have been other men's work. He constantly exercised himself in the instruction of his flock; and not only to them did his diligence extend, but to all the country round about. He had a special licence from Cambridge, which, by the king's special permission, continued the privilege bestowed upon him by Wolsey. And of this he availed himself; preaching wherever he was invited; though his bodily constitution had given way beneath the stress of incessant toil, and he suffered severely from headache, colic, stone, and pleurisy. He knew himself to be charged with a special mission, and he was instant in fulfilling it; though aware that the animosity of the bishops dogged his every step, and that they watched eagerly for some imprudent word which might betray him into their hands.

At last, the Bishop of London thought he had him in his power. At the desire of "a company of merchants," he had preached at S. Abb's in the city, early in the winter of 1531; and soon after his return to West Kingston, was summoned by the bishop to answer for alleged erroneous teaching. He had preached in the diocese of London without per-

mission, and, moreover, had gone about to defend Bilney and his cause against his ordinaries and judges. His friends were greatly alarmed by this hostile movement, and more anxious that he might exculpate himself than sanguine that he would succeed in doing so. He himself apprehended a serious result. "As ye say," he wrote to Sir Edward Baynton, "the matter is weighty, and ought substantially to be looked upon, even as weighty as my life is worth; but how to look substantially upon it otherwise know not I, than to pray my Lord God, day and night that as he hath emboldened me to preach His truth, so He will strengthen me to suffer for it. I pray you pardon me that I write no more distinctly, for my head is [so] out of frame, that it would be too painful for me to write it again. If I be not prevented shortly, I intend to make merry with my parishioners, this Christmas, for all the sorrow, lest, perchance, I never return to them again; and I have heard say that a doe is as good in winter as a buck in summer."* In reply to the episcopal summons he pleaded the length of the journey, the severity of the winter, and his ill-health. At the same time he appealed to Sir Edward Baynton, the chancellor of his diocese; but his enemies would not be denied, and after some delay, "he was had up to London, where he was greatly molested, and detained a long time from his cure at home." The trial was protracted through the months of January, February, March, and April; at first being conducted by

* Latimer, "Remains," p. 334.

Stokesly, Bishop of London ; afterwards by Warham (Canterbury) and the bishops collectively ; and, lastly, by convocation. This reverend body did its utmost to secure a judgment against the man whom they most feared in all England ; subjecting him to a severe cross-examination, and brow-beating him most truculently. But Latimer baffled them by his coolness and patience, as well as by his dialectic ability. A series of Articles was proposed to him, but these he strenuously refused to subscribe ; and especially did he object to two of them, concerning the papal jurisdiction. He was therefore declared contumacious, excommunicated, and handed over to the custody of Warham (March 11). A few days later it was resolved to absolve him from the sentence of excommunication if he subscribed the two articles in question ; but he appealed to the king, and the king, not ignorant of his worth, sent a message to the Convocation to the effect that it was undesirable for the matter to proceed further. They were to be content with a general submission, which was to be made to the archbishop ; and being "taken into favour again at the special request of the king," he was duly absolved, and allowed to return to his parish.

Though rescued from immediate danger by the special interposition of the king, Latimer soon had cause to know that his enemies had not ceased from their activity. He preached the truth too forcibly and too plainly for the comfort of self-seeking

priests, who profited by the ignorance of their flocks; and they endeavoured to inhibit him from his labours on the ground that he had not the bishop's licence. Next, a priest of Bristol, named Brown, complained to one of the leaders of Convocation that he (Latimer) had done much hurt among the people by his preaching, and had sowed errors; that he had promulgated divers opinions fully against the determination of the Church. But his chief opponent, a tool in the hands of abler men, was a certain Oxford divine, named Hubberdin, or Heberdynne, whom Foxe characterises as "a right painted Pharisee, and a great strayer abroad in all quarters of the realm;" and Latimer as of "no great learning, nor yet of stable wit;" who, assuredly, was a man of more zeal than discretion, and as ignorant as he was indiscreetly zealous. Foxe's portrait of him is very graphic:—*

"This shall be enough," he says, "for example's sake for all Christian men necessarily to observe—how the said Hubberdin, after his long railing in all places against Luther, Melancthon, Zwinglius, John Frith, Tyndale, Latimer, and other like professors—riding in his long gown down to the horse's heels, like a Pharisee, or rather like a sloven, dirtied up to the horse's belly,—after his forged tales and fables, dialogues, dreams, dancings, hoppings, and leapings, with other like histrionical toys and gestures used in the pulpit, at last, riding by a church side where the youth of the parish were

* Foxe, "Acts and Monuments," vii. 477, et seq.

dancing in the churchyard, suddenly alighting from his horse, he came into the church, and there causing the bell to toll in the people, thought, instead of a fit of mirth, to give them a sermon of dancing; in the which sermon, after he had patched up certain common texts out of the Scripture, and then coming to the doctors, first to Augustine, then to Ambrose, so to Jerome, and Gregory, Chrysostom, and other doctors, had made every one of them (after his dialogue manner) by name to answer to his call, and to sing after his tune against Luther, Tyndale, Latimer, and other heretics, as he called them; at last, to show a perfect harmony of all those doctors together, as he made them before to sing after his tune, so now to make them dance after his pipe, first he called out Christ and His apostles, then the doctors and seniors of the Church, as in a round ring, all to dance together, with pipe of Hubberdin. Now dance Peter, Paul; now dance Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome; and then old Hubberdin, as he was dancing with his doctors lustily in the pulpit, how he stamp and took on I cannot tell, but crush quoth the pulpit, down cometh the dancer, and there lay Hubberdin, not dancing, but sprawling in the midst of his audience, where altogether he brake not his neck, yet he so brake his leg, and bruised his old bones that he never came in pulpit more."

Latimer was delivered, however, from these annoyances by the good offices of Cranmer, who, on the death of Warham, had been preferred to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. He was well known to the

new primate, who sympathized to a certain extent with his opinions, and was not less eager than himself to raise the moral standard and quicken the spiritual life of the Church. His favour wrought an immediate change in Latimer's condition. Hubberdin was compelled to cease his clamour; and ecclesiastics of the same complexion, if they continued to hate, durst not show their hatred openly. At the instance and request of Latimer, the archbishop was in the habit of licensing divers to preach within his province,—divers, doubtless, of as truthful and honest a category as himself. Cranmer also entrusted to him the administration of certain injunctions relating to preachers, and empowered him to withdraw their licence, if he saw occasion to do so. Moreover, it was through the archbishop that he was recalled to court, and appointed to preach before the king on the Lent Wednesdays, 1534.

The intercourse which thus took place between Henry and his brave-hearted chaplain, so strengthened the former in his good opinion of him, that he readily acted upon the suggestion of Thomas Cromwell, and promoted him, in 1535, to the bishopric of Worcester.*

* Foxe refers to Cromwell as specially concerned in Latimer's promotion. And, as Tulloch remarks, we may well believe so. "The astute secretary and vicar-general, the enemy of monks and the intrepid friend of the new movement in all its directions, must have recognized a congenial spirit and fellow-labourer in the great preacher. They were worthy allies, and trod with equal courage, although swayed by somewhat different impulses, the same perilous path terminating in death; as noble work commonly did in that unhappy time."—Tulloch, p. 285.

On the 3rd of June, in the following year, Bishop Latimer was appointed to preach before Convocation; and the two sermons which he then delivered have probably never been surpassed for earnestness and courage. They were delivered to a hostile audience, at a time when both Church and nation were troubled with the throes of a coming convulsion for which neither was prepared; and they rang with denunciations of a system which his listeners were straining every nerve to uphold. There were assembled in S. Paul's, on this occasion, besides the bishops, "mitred abbots, meditating the treason for which, before many months were past, their quartered limbs would be rolling by the highways; earnest sacramentarians making ready for the stake; the spirits of the two ages, the past and the future, in fierce collision; and above them all, in his vicar-general's chair, sat Cromwell, the angry waters lashing round him, but proud and powerful, lording over the storm."

The meeting of Convocation, ushered in by Latimer's fiery discourses, which breathe with a wonderful intensity "the hate of hate—the scorn of scorn," was in itself very memorable; as it reasserted the royal supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs, and accepted certain articles drawn up by the king* which marked the gradual divergence of the Church of England from the Church of Rome. These failed, however, to give satisfaction either to the adherents

* It is probable that these were formulated by Cranmer, and simply revised by the king.

of the New Learning or of the Old. For the former they did not go far enough; for the latter they went too far. They were debated and passed, but only because it was the king's will. "No party," says Froude,* "was pleased. The Protestants exclaimed against the countenance given to superstition; the Anglo-Catholics lamented the visible taint of heresy, the reduced number of the sacraments (three instead of seven), the doubtful language upon purgatory, and the silence, dangerously significant, on the nature of the priesthood." However, they received the signatures of all present, and were put on record, to engage the curiosity of later generations, as the "first authoritative statement of doctrine in the Anglican Church."

In Convocation Latimer seems to have acted as the leader of the party of progress. But immediately it was at an end, he withdrew from the public stage, and addressed himself to the assiduous discharge of his diocesan duties, "teaching, preaching, exhorting, writing, correcting, and reforming, either as his ability would serve, or else the time would bear." Latimer was never a politician. He took no active part in the political conflicts of the day. This quiescence was not due, as his letters to Cromwell show, to any want of interest in them, but to the direction taken by the English Reformation. In Scotland, the leaders of the Reformation were also and necessarily political leaders, because their work had to be done in opposition to the sovereign;

* Froude, ii. pp. 482-488.

but in England the reformers had on the whole the sympathy of the crown, as well as its protection, and were even guided and urged forward by its influence.

In 1537, Latimer was one of the divines charged with the preparation of a manual of doctrine, entitled "The Institution of a Christian Man,"* consisting of an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Decalogue, and the Sacraments; in the language of which may be traced much of that quiet and stately beauty which distinguishes the Common Prayer Book. Its exposition of doctrine was moderate in tone, yet more Catholic than the Articles of 1536. It restored the seven sacraments, and explained the nature of sacramental grace in the old fashion. To Latimer it was not very acceptable; but he made no open protest. Soon afterwards he published his "Injunctions to the Prior and Convent of Worcester," embodying a series of regulations for the better ordering of all the monastic foundations in his diocese.

In the following year he was recalled to London, to share in some proceedings which it is impossible to believe he approved. He was concerned with Archbishop Cranmer and another prelate in the examination of a Dr. Crewkehorne, whose worst fault appears to have been an unreasoning fanaticism; and in that of John Lambert, a friend of Bilney and of Tyndale, who was accused of denying the Real Presence, tried before the king in person, found guilty of heresy, and burned at Smithfield, exclaiming with

* Also known as "The Bishops' Book."

his last breath, "None but Christ—none but Christ."* He had previously been appointed by Cromwell to preach the sermon at the execution of Friar Forest, for denying the royal supremacy. From a letter which he addressed to the minister, we discern that he would gladly have been spared the painful task:—"If it be your pleasure," he writes, "as it is, that I shall play the fool after my customable manner when Forest shall suffer, I would wish that my stage stood near unto Forest, for I would endeavour myself so to convert the people that otherwise I might also convert Forest, God so helping, or, rather, altogether working. Wherefore, I would that he shall hear what I shall say—*si forte*. If he would yet, with his heart, return to his abjuration, I would wish his pardon, such is my foolishness."

* Cromwell in a letter to Sir Thomas Wyatt, thus describes the trial: "The 16th of this present month (November), the King's majesty, for the reverence of the holy sacrament of the altar, did sit openly in his hall, and there presided at the disputation, process, and judgment of a miserable heretic sacramentary, who was burnt the twentieth of the same month. It was a wonder to see how princely, with how excellent gravity, and inestimable majesty, his Majesty exercised the very office of a superior head of his Church of England; how benignly his grace essayed to convert the miserable man; how strong and manifest reason his Highness alleged against him. I wished the princes of Christendom to have seen it; undoubtedly they should have much marvelled at his Majesty's most high wisdom and judgment, and reputed him none otherwise after the same than in manner the mirror and light of all other kings and princes in Christendom. The same was done openly, with great solemnity."—Quoted in Watt's "Life of Sir Thomas Wyatt." See also, Foxe's "Acts and Monuments," vol. v.

We could wish the compassion had been deeper and more active, and yet in that hard age, when the most rudimentary principles of toleration were not accepted, it was much for a man to express even the slightest pity for "a traitor and a heretic."* In this year Latimer was also busy in the detection of the famous imposture of "the blood of Hales." He writes to Cromwell, "According to your commission, we have viewed a certain supposed relic, called

* Mr. Froude gives a vivid picture of Forest's execution. "The preparations," he says, "were made with a horrible completeness. It was the single supremacy case which was conducted upon ecclesiastical principles, and when treason was identified with heresy. A gallows was erected over the stake, from which the wretched victim was to be suspended in a cradle of chains. When the machinery was complete, and the chips of the idol lay ready, he was brought out and placed upon a platform. The Lord Mayor, the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, Lord Southampton, and Cromwell were present with a pardon, if at the last moment his courage should fail, and he would ask for it. The sermon began, It was of the usual kind—the passionate language of passionate conviction. When it was over Latimer turned to Forest, and asked him if he would live or die. 'I will die,' was the gallant answer. 'Do your worst upon me. Seven years ago you durst not, for your life, have preached such words as these; and even, if an angel from heaven should come down and teach me any other doctrine than that which I learnt as a child, I should not believe him. Take me; cut me to pieces, joint from joint. Burn—hang—do what you will—I will be true henceforth to my faith.' It was enough. He was laid upon his iron bed, and slung off into the air, and the fire was kindled. In his mortal agony he clutched at the steps of the ladder, to sway himself out of the blaze; and the pitiless chronicler, who records the scene, could see only in this last weakness an evidence of guilt. 'So impatiently,' says Hall, 'he took his death as never any man that put his trust in God.'"—Froude, iii. 110, 111.

the blood of Hales,* which was encased within a round beryle, garnished and bound on every side with silver, which we caused to be taken out of the said beryle, and have viewed the same, being within a little glass, and also tried the same according to our powers, by all means; and by force of the view and other trials, we judge the substance and matter of the said supposed relic to be an unctuous gum, coloured, which, being in the glass, appeared to be a glistening red, resembling partly the colour of blood. And after, we did take part of the said substance out of the glass, and that it was apparent yellow colour, like amber or base gold, and doth cleave as gum or bird-lime."† Evidently the "miracle" was similar in its working to that of the supposed liquefaction of the blood of S. Januarius, which long moved the wonder of the ignorant Neapolitans. The exposure of this and similar deceptions had a great effect upon the mind of the people, and unquestionably prepared them to receive the doctrines of the Reformation with greater readiness. It was not we think, without influence upon Latimer himself, whose shrewd common sense and frank honesty must have revolted more and more strongly against the Church which traded thus openly with fraud, and by its encouragement of "relic worship," converted a natural and commendable feeling of reverence to the basest and most ignoble purposes.

The English Reformation differed in many respects

* A village in Worcestershire. † Latimer's "Remains," p. 407.

from that of Scotland, or Germany, but in none more than in its mode of advance. Its progress was not swift, continuous, and direct, like the course of a torrent; but capricious and uncertain, now moving onward with tolerable regularity, now eddying and even turning back, like the meanders of a lowland river. This characteristic it owed to the fact that it was not, at all events, in its earlier period, a movement of the people, actuated by a passionate impulse or deep conviction; but rather a part of the royal policy, and therefore changing as that policy changed. No doubt it would hardly have been possible had there been no dissatisfaction with the Roman Church to work upon; no aspirations after a better and purer state of religious matters. But it was moulded *ab extra*, and depended in no small degree on the action of the king; an action not wholly unregulated by motives of belief, but chiefly guided by considerations of self-interest. When, therefore, the Anglo-Catholic party, headed by Gardiner and Bonner, who accepted the royal supremacy but adhered to the distinctive doctrines of Romanism, grew in strength and power, and was proved by the insurrections in Yorkshire and Lancashire, and the "Pilgrimage of Grace," to possess a strong hold on the sympathies of a great body of the people, Henry veered towards them. He himself, while rejecting the pretensions of the pope, did not quarrel with the creed of the Roman Church; his main object was to secure the stability of his throne. Thus it came to pass that, in 1539, the

Reformation made a retrograde step; and parliament accepted and passed the Six Articles Bill, which made it penal to deny or in any way impugn the dogmas of the Real Presence, communion in one kind, the celibacy of the priesthood, the lawfulness of monastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. The first article did not excite much discussion, for the English reformers had not yet shaken themselves free of the doctrine of transubstantiation; but the other articles were strenuously contested by Cranmer and Latimer, the Bishops of Ely and Salisbury, Rochester, and S. David's. After the act was passed, Latimer, with his usual honesty, resigned his bishopric. Cromwell, says Foxe, having failed to induce him to withdraw his opposition, gave him to understand, "contrary to the fact," that the king desired his resignation * (July 1, 1539). "When I was in trouble," said Latimer, afterwards, in a sermon preached before Edward VI.,† "it was objected and said unto me, that I was singular; that no man thought as I thought; that I loved a singularity in all that I did; and that I took a way contrary to the king and the whole parliament; and that I was bewailed with those that had better wits than I, that I was contrary to them all. Marry, this was a sore thunderbolt. I thought it to be an irksome thing to be alone, and to have no fellow." But this feeling of solitariness did not prevail over his conviction of what was true, just, and honourable.

* Foxe, "Acts and Monuments," vii. 462.

† "Sermons," p. 136.

After his resignation, Latimer was placed "in ward," in the house of Dr. Sampson, Bishop of Chichester, and so remained until that prelate was himself committed to the Tower. At this time he seems to have considered his life in danger: he was interested, he says, in hearing of the executions that took place frequently in the city, "because I looked that my part should have been therein. I looked every day to be called to it myself." Being set at liberty—perhaps through the action of Henry himself—he retired into the country, where he resided for awhile in peaceful seclusion. Being injured by the fall of a tree, he repaired to London for medical advice; whereupon he was much molested and troubled by the bishops. He continued at large, however, until the autumn of 1546, when, on suspicion of being connected with a Dr. Crome, who had preached against purgatory, he was summoned before the Council, and committed to the Tower. There he remained until the "blessed King Edward entered his crown" (Friday, January 28, 1547).

In the second year of Edward's reign, the Bishopric of Worcester was again offered to Latimer, in consequence of an address from the House of Commons to the Lord Protector Somerset; but he declined it, probably on account of his ill-health, and partly, perhaps, from a feeling that he could better serve the good cause in his vocation as a preacher. That the House of Commons should have instigated the offer must be considered a striking proof, of the influence of his manly character, his

pure life, and his uncompromising declaration of what he conceived to be the truth. Apart from his pastoral labours, we find him employed on the commission appointed to devise means for the suppression of heresy; and he was also one of the divines named to reform the ecclesiastical law. It is said that he assisted Cranmer in compiling the "Homilies," which were put forth by the authority of the king. "In the which his painful travails he continued all king Edward's time; preaching for the most part two sermons every Sunday; and, besides this, every morning ordinarily, winter and summer, about two of the clock in the morning, he was at his book most diligently."

It was at this time that he justly earned for himself the title of "the Apostle of England." With wonderful force and fervour, like John the Baptist, he denounced the sins of the world, and bade men look forward to the coming of the Christ. Not troubling himself with doctrinal questions or "schemes of salvation," he exhorted men to repentance, and to the diligent practice of the Christian virtues. "By your acts," he told them, "ye shall be judged." As is always the case when an old creed is overthrown, and men break away from the ancient traditions, a period of disorder and immorality had set in, and men seemed to have broken loose from all their accustomed restraints. "In times past," said Latimer, "men were full of pity and compassion; but now there is no pity; for in London their brother shall die in the streets for cold, he shall lie

sick at the door between stock and stock—I cannot tell what to call it—and there perish for hunger. In times past, when any rich man died in London, they were wont to help the scholars at the universities with exhibitions. When any man died, they would bequeath great sums of money towards the relief of the poor. When I was a scholar at Cambridge myself, I knew many that had relief of the rich men in London; but now I can hear no such good report, and yet I inquire of it and hearken for it. Charity is waxen cold; none helpeth the scholar nor yet the poor; now that the knowledge of God's Word is brought to light, and many earnestly study and labour to set it forth, now almost no man helpeth to maintain them." Against such abuses Latimer felt constrained to lift up his voice, and like a trumpet his indignant eloquence rang through the land. It was the preacher's business, he said, to correct those who sat in high places; and to kings, statesmen, councillors, magistrates, he pointed out their duty, with courageous candour. For every class he had a word of warning and reproof. "You landlords," he exclaimed, "you rent-raisers, I may say, you step-lords, you have for your possessions too much. That that heretofore went for twenty or forty pounds by the year, which is an honest portion to be had gratis in one lordship of another's sweat and labour, now is let for fifty or one hundred pounds by the year; and there is caused such dearth that poor men which live of their labour cannot with the sweat of their faces have a living.

I tell you, my lords and masters, this is not for the king's honour. It is to the king's honour that his subjects be led in true religion. It is to the king's honour that the commonwealth be advanced, that the dearth be provided for, and the commodities of this realm so employed, as it may be to the setting of his subjects at work and keeping them from idleness. If the king's honour, as some men say, standeth in the multitude of people, then these graziers, enclosers, rent-raisers, are hinderers of the king's honour: for whereas have been a great many householders and inhabitants, there is now but a shepherd and his dog. My lords and masters, such proceedings do intend plainly to make of the yeomanry slavery. The enhancing and rearing goes all to your private commodity and wealth. Ye had a single too much, and now ye have double too much; but let the preacher preach till his tongue be worn to the strings, nothing is amended. This one thing I will tell you; from whom it cometh I know, even from the devil. I know his intent in it. If he bring it to pass that the yeomanry be not able to put their sons to school—as, indeed, the universities do wondrously decay already—and that they be not able to marry their daughters, to the avoiding of whoredom, I say ye pluck salvation from the people, and utterly destroy the realm; for by the yeomen's sons the faith of Christ is, and hath been maintained chiefly." To tell plain truths like these, in language that went straight to the mark, like a crossbow-bolt; to rouse the country to the

need of a practical and every-day religion, a religion of good works as well as of faith ; to strip the tinsel and gilding off the idols of the world, and to expose a sham wherever he found one, this was Latimer's work in the reign of Edward VI. A man of the people, imbued with popular sympathies, he exercised in his day and generation a not dissimilar influence to that which is now exercised by the press.

Queen Mary succeeded to the throne on the death of her brother, in July, 1553 ; and Latimer immediately felt that his work was done. For a time the reforming movement was stayed ; and in the darkness of re-action all the bats came out to scare the wayfarer with unclean wing. The leaders of the Reformation were doomed from the first ; and among them none had provoked so many enemies as the great preacher. A pursuivant was sent into Lincolnshire to summon him before the Council : yet there were some in the Government who were willing that Latimer should escape, and the pursuivant was instructed simply to leave his warrant ; he had orders, he said, not to wait. The brave old man, however, would not think of flight ; for all he had done and said, he was willing to answer ; and if a witness to the truth were needed, was ready to pour out his blood. He appeared before the Council, who were pleased to consider his demeanour "seditious," and committed him to the Tower. "What, my friend!" he said to the warder, who was an old acquaintance. "How do you? I am come to be

your neighbour again." He was lodged in Sir Thomas Palmer's rooms in the garden; and though he was shattered with disease, no fire was allowed him throughout the winter-cold. This and all other discomforts he bore with his accustomed good humour, jestingly saying to the Lord Lieutenant of the Tower, that if he did not look better after him, he should give him the slip yet.

In 1554, in company with Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Ridley, he was removed to Oxford (March 8th), to be examined on the subject of the Mass by a Committee of Convocation, who had already determined to send these prelates to the stake. Latimer refused to enter upon a fruitless discussion. He was an old man, he said, and for the last twenty years had had little use for Latin, so that he could not argue in it. Then replied to him Master Smith, of Oriel College; while Doctor Cartwright, Master Harpsfield, and divers others, had "snatches at him," and indulged in bitter taunts. "He did not escape hisses and scornful laughing. He was very faint, and desired that he might not long tarry." He handed in, however, a complete confession of faith, which led to a further outburst on the part of the commissioners, and their president, a certain notorious Dr. Weston. They, the three prelates, he said, were a sort of fling-brains and light heads, which were never constant in any one thing; as it was to be seen in the turning of the table (*i.e.*, the change in the position of the altar), where, like a sort of apes, they could not tell which way to turn their tails, looking one

day west, and another day east—one that way, and another this way.

The examination over, Latimer and his companions were removed to the Bocardo, or common gaol, where they lay in rigorous confinement for upwards of a year. How Latimer employed the dreary hours we have no record; but we can readily conjecture that the Scriptures were his constant study. Three letters which he wrote at this time are extant: one, of only a few lines, to a Mrs. Wilkinson, in acknowledgment of some act of kindness; another, of general exhortation to “all unfeigned lovers of God’s truth, to remain steadfast in the faith;” and the third, to some person unknown, who had an opportunity of escaping from arrest, and probable martyrdom, by giving a bribe, but, though not required to recant his opinions, doubted the lawfulness of such a mode of self-preservation. To this last, Latimer replied that he took the same view, and highly commended his judgment in thinking it not lawful to redeem himself from the martyr’s crown, unless he would exchange glory for shame, and his inheritance for a mess of pottage. “We were created,” he continued, “to set forth God’s glory all the days of our life, which we, as unthankful sinners, have forgotten to do, as we ought, all our days hitherto; and now God, by affliction, doth offer us good occasion to perform one day of our life, one duty. If any man perceive his faith not to abide the fire, let such an one with weeping buy his liberty until he hath

obtained more strength, lest the gospel suffer by him some shameful recantation. Let the dead bury the dead. Do you embrace Christ's cross, and Christ shall embrace you."

The time came at length when Cardinal Pole, and the other persecutors of the three bishops, felt strong enough to inflict their doom. A commission, consisting of Bishops Burkes of Gloucester, Holyman of Bristol, and White of Lincoln, was appointed to try them again for heresy, the first having been irregular. The commissioners took their place under the altar of S. Mary's Church, on Saturday, the 7th of September, to deal with Cranmer. With Ridley and Latimer they dealt afterwards. The former was brought before the court, in the Divinity School, on the 30th of September, and required to acknowledge the Real Presence and the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass. When he refused, he was told that he would be cut off from the Church as a heretic, and handed over to the civil power. He was allowed the night for consideration. Then Latimer was ushered in—"dressed in an old threadbare gown of Bristol frieze, a handkerchief on his head with a night cap over it, and over that again another cap, with two broad flaps buttoned under the chin. A leather belt was round his waist, to which a Testament was attached; his spectacles, without a case, hung from his neck."* He, too, denied the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Wine, he said, was wine; and bread was bread; there was

* Froude, v. 552, 553; Foxe, vii. 529.

a change in the sacrament, it was true, but not in the nature—in the dignity. In the course of the proceedings, the Bishop of Gloucester rudely accused him of want of learning. “Do you look for learning at my hand,” he exclaimed, “which have gone so long to the school of oblivion, making the bare walls my library, keeping me so long in prison without book, or pen, or ink, and now you let me loose to come and answer to articles! You deal with me as though two were appointed to fight for life and death; and overnight the one, through friends and favour, is cherished, and hath good counsel given him how to encounter with his enemy; the other, for envy or lack of friends, all the whole night is set in the stocks. In the morning, when they shall meet, the one is in strength and lively, the other is stark of his limbs and almost dead for feebleness. Think you that to run through this man with a spear is a goodly victory?”

As to the case of Ridley, sentence was deferred until the following morning (October 1st), when the court assembled in S. Mary’s Church, attended by the authorities, both of the town and the university. The prisoners appeared. The same questions were asked; the same answers given; and then sentence was pronounced upon the three reformers as obstinate and incurable heretics.

The 16th of October was the day of execution; the place, an open area outside the north wall of the town—a stone’s throw from the south corner of Baliol College, and about the same distance from

A sermon was preached, "of scarce a quarter of an hour," and Ridley then requested permission, for Christ's sake, to say a few words. One of the doctors sprang to his feet, laid his hand on Ridley's mouth, and said, "Recant, and you may both speak and live." "So long as the breath is in my body," replied the martyr, "I will never deny the Lord Jesus Christ, and His known truth. God's will be done in me." Turning to the people, he added, in a loud voice: "I commit our cause to Almighty God, who shall indifferently judge all."

The necessary preparations for the close of this sad tragedy were completed without delay. To his brother-in-law Ridley gave his gown and tippet; to Sir Henry Lee, a new groat; to others, nutmegs, slices of ginger, handkerchiefs, his watch, and miscellaneous trinkets. Some plucked off the points of his hose; "happy was he that might get any rag of him." Latimer had no such memorials to leave. Throwing off his cloak he stood erect in his shroud; and took his place on one side of the stake, with Ridley on the other.

"O, heavenly Father," said Ridley, "I give unto Thee most humble thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee even unto death. Have mercy, O Lord, on this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies."

A chain was passed round their bodies, and fastened with a staple. Then a friend came forward with a bag of powder, which he hung round Ridley's neck, to shorten his sufferings. "I will take it

to be sent of God," observed the martyr. "Have you more for my brother?" "Yes, sir," said the friend. "Give it him betimes then, lest ye be too late."

The executioner applied a lighted torch to the faggots, and soon the flames shot up and surged around the two friends. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley," cried the heroic Latimer; "play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." "*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum! Domini, recipe spiritum meum,*" was Ridley's prayer. "O Father of heaven," ejaculated Latimer, bathing his hands in the scorching blaze and stroking his face, "receive my soul." Soon afterwards the powder exploded, and his agony was at an end. Ridley's sufferings were more protracted. The faggots had been heaped up too thickly over the gorse intended to ignite them, and they smouldered round the dying man's legs. "I cannot burn," he cried; "Lord, have mercy on me; let the fire come to me; I cannot burn." With mistaken kindness, his brother-in-law piled on more wood, which did but deaden the flame. At last a bystander lifted the heap so as to let in the air: "the red tongues of fire shot up fiercely, Ridley wrested himself into the middle of them, and the powder did its work."

Let us thank God that no such cruel scene is possible nowadays in England. As Latimer predicted, the candle that day lighted has never been put out. Between the Church of Rome and the

heart of the English people, the martyrdom of the two bishops has dug a gulf which no lapse of time will fill up; even while they acknowledge, as it is only just to acknowledge, that the accursed cruelty was a "a legitimate fruit of the superstition, that, in the eyes of the Maker of the world, an error of belief is the greatest of crimes; that which for all other sins there is forgiveness, a mistake in the intellectual intricacies of speculative opinion will be punished, not with the brief agony of a painful death, but with tortures to which there shall be no end."*

Here closes the record of Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester; "for whose laborious travails, fruitful life, and constant death, the whole realm of England has cause to give great thanks to Almighty God."

We have already indicated our estimate of the martyr's character. We shall add to it the opinion of one who, as a member of a religious body not in communion with the Church of England, may be supposed to regard his life and work with an impartial eye:—†

"The character of Latimer," he says, "presents a combination of noble and disinterested qualities, scarcely rising to greatness, but highly significant and interesting. The natural healthiness of his earlier years at the Leicestershire farm, of 'three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost,' reappears in all his future career as a student; a

* Fronde, v. 559.

† Principal Tulloch, "Leaders of the Reformation," pp. 304, 305.

preacher, a bishop, a martyr. The same simple spirit, and honest temper, and cheery humour, and unresting faithfulness are visible in all he said and did. The *man* is never lost sight of, in whatever special attitude he shows himself; nay, the rustic boy, who was the "father of the man," is scarcely ever forgotten. A fresh and rough fragrance of nature hangs about him everywhere, impregnating and purifying with a rare and happy heartiness all his work.

"A simplicity verging on originality is perhaps his most prominent characteristic. . . . The simple way in which he looks at life, with his eyes unblinded by conventional drapery of any kind, and his heart responsive to all its broadest and most common interests—of which he speaks in language never nice and circumlocutory, but straight, plain, and forcible,—gives to his sermons their singular air of reality, and to his character that sort of piquancy which we at once recognize as a direct work of nature. He is a kind of Goldsmith in theology; exhibiting the same artless feeling and sunny temper in the midst of all difficulties; the same disregard of his own comforts, and warm and kindly play of benevolent humour meeting you at every turn, like a roving and gleeful presence, and flushing laughter in your face. It would be absurd, of course, to push this comparison further. There is beneath all the oddities of Latimer's character a deep and solemn consistency of purpose, and a spirit of righteous indignation against wrong which, apart

from all dissimilarities of work, destroys any mere essential analogy between the great humorist of the Reformation in England and the later humorist of its literature. Yet the same childlike transparency of character is beheld in both, and the same fresh stamp of nature, which, in its simple originality, is found to outlast far more brilliant and imposing, but artificially cultured qualities."

[The principal authorities for the life of Latimer are—Foxe's "Acts and Monuments;" Strype's "Ecclesiastical Memorials;" and Latimer's "Sermons" and "Remains." See also Froude's "History of England;" Demaus' "Life of Bishop Latimer;" D'Aubigné's "History of the Reformation;" and Principal Tulloch's "Leaders of the Reformation;" etc.]

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BISHOP KEN.

A.D. 1637—1711.

THOMAS KEN, sometime Bishop of Bath and Wells, was the son of Thomas Ken, attorney-at-law, of Furnival's Inn, Holborn, by his first wife, and was born in July, 1637, at Little Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire. Of his early years no particulars are on record. In 1650, at the age of thirteen, he was admitted into Winchester School, and seven years later he entered New College, Oxford, as a Probationer Fellow. Of his university life we know almost as little as of his boyhood, except that his fine voice and natural taste for music led to his joining a musical club which had been recently established at Oxford. In this club his associates were fifteen in number, and among them was Nathaniel Crewe, afterwards Bishop of Durham, and founder of the charities for distressed seamen at Bamborough Castle. At Oxford Ken made the acquaintance of Thomas Thynne, the future Viscount Weymouth; and the acquaintance ripened into a friendship which endured throughout both their

lives. In 1661, immediately after the Restoration, Ken took the degree of Bachelor of Arts; and it is probable that he soon afterwards received holy orders. That he had acquired very general esteem and respect by his character and scholarship may be inferred from his unanimous election to a fellowship, in 1666. He thereupon returned to Winchester, where the room in which as Fellow he resided, pursued his studies, and amused his leisure by playing on his lute, is still shown to visitors.

Morley was at this time Bishop of Winchester, and a permanent occupant of the episcopal palace was Izaak Walton, the author of the "Complete Angler," who had married Ken's sister Anna, the "Kenna" of her husband's ballads. Under the episcopal roof he lived, in virtue of a many years' friendship, "a beloved and honoured guest, with mild and lighted countenance, snow-white locks, a thankful but humble heart—with piety as sincere as unostentatious—till he closed his eyes on all the 'changes and chances of this mortal life,' at ninety years of age." Through his brother-in-law, Ken was admitted to the intimacy of Bishop Morley, who was not slow to recognize the graces of his eminently Christian character, and, in 1669, promoted him to a prebend stall in Winchester Cathedral.* But Ken was no beneficed idler. Though holding no pastoral charge, he laboured diligently in his Master's service. "His most exemplary goodness and piety,"

* He also gave him the rectory of Woodhay, but this Ken soon resigned, from a conscientious objection to pluralities.

says his earliest biographer, "did eminently exert itself: for this purpose he kept a constant course of preaching at S. John's Church in the South (a suburb of the cathedral city), where there was no preaching minister, and which he therefore called his *cure*, and brought many Anabaptists to the Church of England; and baptized them himself."

It was during this time that Ken composed his "Manual" for the use of the Winchester Scholars; and those beautiful "Morning" and "Evening Hymns," which are the precious heritage of every English-speaking child, and the best-known compositions in our English Hymnody. Scarcely less dear to the Nonconformist than to the Anglican, they are "sung or said," day after day, in ten thousand households in Canada, Australia, India, the isles of the Pacific, under the sky of Africa, as well as in their native land. Originally written to be sung in the chambers of the Winchester boys, there is good reason to believe that Ken himself adapted them to that fine melody of Tallis's, with which they are inseparably wedded. Of his custom of singing his Morning Hymn at the earliest dawn, Hawkins gives the following account:—"That neither his study might be the aggressor on his hours of instruction, nor what he judged duty prevent his improvement, he strictly accustomed himself to but one hour's sleep, which obliged him to rise at one or two o'clock in the morning, or sometimes earlier. He seemed to go to rest with no other purpose than the refreshing and enabling him with more vigour

and cheerfulness to sing his Morning Hymn, as he used to do, to his lute, before he put on his clothes." It may be added that the exquisite simplicity of these hymns, which has found for them a permanent place in the heart of the people, is in striking contrast to the elaborate and artificial structure of much of Ken's later verse. What can be more touching, or more expressive, and yet at the same time more unadorned, than the following?—

"All praise to Thee, my God, this night,
For all the blessings of the light :
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings !
Under Thine own Almighty wings.

"Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son,
The ills that I this day have done ;
That with the world, myself, and Thee
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be."

There is not a superfluous word ; not a single ornamental adjective ; language cannot be plainer ; and yet the effect produced is charming. The Morning Hymn seems a jubilant expression of thanksgiving and hopefulness ; the Evening Hymn fills the heart with the peace and devotion that spring from an intense faith in the loving Providence of God.*

From the year 1669 to the beginning of the year 1675, Ken's life was placid and uniform. In the latter year he accompanied his nephew, Isaak Walton, the younger, on a continental tour. It was the year of the Papal jubilee ; and the English

* These hymns were added to the manual in 1695.

Churchman had an opportunity of witnessing the Roman Court in its most gorgeous ostentation. He was afterwards wont to observe, that he had great reason to give God thanks for his travels, since (if it were possible) he "returned rather more confirmed of the purity of the Protestant religion than before." At the close of the year he was back again in Winchester. In 1679 he took his doctor's degree, and about the same time was made chaplain to Charles II., who, during his frequent visits to Winchester, must have had numerous opportunities of observing his sterling merits. This appointment led to his being despatched to Holland as the chaplain and adviser of the Princess of Orange. In this post, says Hawkins, his most prudent behaviour and strict piety gave him entire credit and high esteem with that princess. He continues: "But a consequential act of his singular zeal for the honour of his country, in behalf of a young lady, so far exasperated the prince, that he warmly threatened to turn him from the service; which the doctor resisting, and begging leave of the princess (whom to his death he distinguished by the title of his mistress), warned himself from the service, till, by the entreaty of the prince himself, he was courted to his former post and respect; and when the year expired, he returned to England." The young lady was Miss Wreth, one of the princess's maids of honour, with whom Count Julienstein, half-uncle of the Prince of Orange, had fallen in love. The count afterwards seemed unwilling to behave honourably to the young lady, but

Ken made himself her champion, and by his earnest remonstrances, shamed him into marrying her. The prince, greatly offended at this alliance of an English lady without title or estate, with one so nearly related to him, never forgave Ken's interference.

Ken returned to Winchester early in 1681. The king soon after repaired thither to superintend the erection of the stately palace he had projected. He was accompanied by his mistress, Nell Gwynne, and desiring to lodge her close to his own apartments at the Deanery, he demanded her admittance to the adjoining prebendal residence of Ken. With all the indignation of a virtuous mind the king's chaplain boldly refused the royal request. "Not for his kingdom!" was the uncompromising answer; and Charles had the good sense to admire his chaplain's consistency. He afterwards rewarded it, as we shall see, by advancing him to the episcopal bench.

In the expedition to Tangier, in 1683, Ken sailed as chaplain to the admiral, Lord Dartmouth. He returned in the early spring of 1684, to find his brother-in-law dead, and Bishop Morley dying. The death of the bishop soon followed; and Mew, of Bath and Wells, was then translated to Winchester, leaving his own see vacant; and the vacancy was filled up by the appointment of Ken, at the express command of the king. "Odd's fish!" he exclaimed; "who shall have Bath and Wells but the little fellow who would not give poor Nelly a lodging?" Charles had honesty enough to respect in others the virtues he outraged in his own private life. It

was one of his latest acts, for his death occurred before the newly-made bishop took possession of his temporalities.

Of his unexpected elevation Ken thus speaks :—

“ Among the herdsmen I, a common swain,
Liv'd, pleas'd with my low cottage on the plain ;
Till up, like Amos, on a sudden caught,
I to the pastoral chair was trembling brought.”

Bishop Burnet refers to it with a judgment warped by divergence in religious and political views. “ Ken,” he says, “ succeeded Mew in Bath and Wells ; a man of an ascetic course of life, and yet of a very lively temper, but too hot and sudden. He had a very edifying way of preaching, but it was more apt to move the passions than instruct ; so that his sermons were rather beautiful than solid ; yet his way in them was very taking.* The king seemed fond of him ; and by him and Turner the papists hoped that great progress might be made in gaining, or at least deluding, the clergy.” If the papists had any such hope, it was speedily dissipated. Ken belonged to what is now known as the Catholic school in the Church of England, but was as little inclined towards Romanism as Burnet himself. He had a firmer grasp of true Church principles, however, than the clever but shallow Bishop of Salisbury ; he was a better theologian, and a bolder defender of the faith. Between the two men there was little in common.

* James II. always spoke of Ken as the best preacher among the Protestants.

Ken, as in duty bound, attended the death-bed of his royal patron, behaving with his usual courage and sincerity. He would not allow the Duchess of Portsmouth, the last and not the least shameless of Charles's mistresses, to enter the sick man's chamber, but strongly urged upon him the necessity of being reconciled to the wife he had insulted by his infidelity and injured by his neglect. Burnet admits that the bishop diligently applied himself to the task of awakening the king's dormant conscience; "he spoke with a great elevation, both of thought and expression, like a man inspired. He resumed the matter often, and pronounced many ejaculations and prayers, which affected all who were present, except him that was the most concerned, who seemed to take no notice of him, and made no answers to him. He pressed the king six or seven times to take the sacrament, but the king always declined it, saying he was very weak. A table with the elements upon it, ready to be consecrated, was brought into the room; which occasioned a report to be then spread about that he *had* received it. Ken pressed him to declare that he desired it, and that he died in the communion of the Church of England. To that he answered nothing. Ken asked him, if he desired absolution of his sins? It seems the king, if he then thought at all, thought that would do him no hurt; so Ken pronounced it over him."* We may rest assured, however, that unless

* Ken's own account, as preserved by Hawkins, runs as follows: "And now at this juncture it was, when the king's period

Charles had shown some signs of repentance and contrition, the bishop would never have given him absolution. But the royal chamber, being afterwards cleared, a Roman priest, one Huddleston, who had saved the king's life after the battle of Worcester, was, as everybody knows, admitted; received his confession, and administered the rites of the Roman Church. The last scene was not unworthy of the strange drama of Charles's career.*

of life drew near, his distemper seized his head, and our bishop well knowing how much had been put off to that point, and fearing the strength of his distemper would give him but little time (as indeed it proved), his duty urging him, he gave a close attendance by the royal bed, without intermission, for at least three days and nights; watching, at proper intervals, to suggest pious and proper thoughts and ejaculations on so serious an occasion; in which time the Duchess of Portsmouth coming to the room, the bishop prevailed with his majesty to have her removed, and took the occasion of representing the injury done to the queen so effectually, that his majesty was induced to send for the queen, and asking pardon, had the satisfaction of her forgiveness before he died. The bishop having homely urged the necessity of a full, and prevailed, as is hoped, for a sincere repentance, several times proposed the administration of the Holy Sacrament, but, although it was not absolutely rejected, it was yet delayed from time to time, till (I know not by *what* authority) the bishop, and all others present, were put out from the presence for about the space of an hour, during which time, it has been suggested, Father Huddleston was admitted to give extreme unction."

* Evelyn, in his diary, thus describes the king's last hours:—"Prayers were solemnly made in all the churches, especially in both the court chapels, where the chaplains relieved one another every half-quarter of an hour from the time he began to be in danger till he expired, according to the form prescribed in the Church offices. Those who assisted his majesty's devotions were, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of London, Durham,

His brother's nomination of Ken to the episcopal throne of Bath and Wells, having been confirmed by James II., the bishop entered on the discharge of his new and solemn duties. He continued assiduous in visiting the poor; preached often and fervently; traversed on "a sorry horse" his diocese, in order to bring himself closely acquainted with its condition; encouraged his clergy in good works; reprimanded the idle; and set to his people a bright and shining example of unaffected piety. He bestowed particular care on the education of the children of the poor, favouring the establishment of parochial schools in all the towns of his diocese. "During summer he would repair to some great parish, where he would preach, confirm, and catechise himself. In the great hall of his palace at Wells, he had always, on Sundays, twelve poor men or women to

and Ely, but more especially Ken, the Bishop of Bath and Wells. It is said they exceedingly urged the receiving the Holy Sacrament, but his majesty told them he would consider of it, which he was so long about that it was too late. Others whispered that the bishops and lords, except the Earls of Bath and Feversham, being ordered to withdraw the night before, Huddleston, the priest, had presumed to administer the papist offices. He gave his breeches and keys to the duke, who was almost continually kneeling by his bedside, and in tears. He also recommended to him the care of his natural children, except the Duke of Monmouth, now in Holland, and in his displeasure. He entreated the queen to pardon him (not without cause): a little before she had sent a bishop to excuse her not more frequently visiting him, in regard of her excessive grief, and that his majesty would forgive it if at any time she had offended him. He spake to the duke to be kind to the Duchess of Cleveland, and especially Portsmouth, and that Nelly might not starve."

dine with him, instructing them at the same time." A dignified hospitality it was his delight to maintain. "In the court of the palace at Wells there yet remain the lofty Gothic windows of that Hall, called of the Hundred Men, where public meetings were held, and the business of the county transacted. The palace was open to the judges, counsel, and noblemen and gentlemen of the county; at the head of whom appeared the mild and apostolic host, at his episcopal table. The clergy, and the neighbouring noblemen and gentlemen of the county, were at all times expected and welcome and honoured guests." To literary labour, during his episcopate, Ken did not greatly incline. His publications were few, and unimportant; namely, "A Sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of Bath, on Ascension Day, May 5, 1687;" "An Exposition of the Church Catechism; or, Practice of Divine Love;" "Directions for Prayer," printed with the former; and "A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, concerning their behaviour during Lent."

His true Christian charity and pity induced him, after the collapse of Monmouth's rebellion in 1685, to extend his protection to the fugitives from the fatal field of Sedgemoor. His palace stood scarce a day's journey from that red grave of a wild ambition; and its gates were crowded by supplicants whom he cheered with wise advice and relieved with liberal hands. It was at no small risk to himself that he bestowed his charity on these unfortunate "rebels."

But he did more. When the victorious general, the Earl of Feversham, was hanging his prisoners in cold blood, Ken checked him with the warning that they were by law entitled to a trial, and that their execution without trial would be deemed a murder. His Christian courage and fervent piety recommended him to James as the fittest person to prepare the unfortunate Monmouth for the death to which, with a strange forgetfulness of the ties of blood, he had doomed him. Ken, with Turner, Bishop of Ely, and Drs. Tennison and Hooper, accompanied him to the scaffold. He took no part in the discussion on the doctrine of non-resistance inhumanly raised by Bishop Turner, but confined himself to assisting the duke in his devotions.*

After the victory of Sedgemoor and that Bloody Assize, which filled the counties of Dorset and Somerset with the tears of orphans and widows, James II. felt strong enough, or thought himself strong enough, to proceed in his long-meditated design of crushing the liberties of England and re-establishing the supremacy of the Roman Church. He attempted to evade the resistance of Parlia-

* "*Monday Night.* The next day the intimation of his execution to be on Wednesday thereafter, was first brought to him by the Bishops of Ely, and Bath and Wells, who stayed most of the day and night with him. The two bishops I have named were attending to the last minute on the scaffold, etc. The heads of the divines' discourse with him, was to make him sensible of the former course of life he led, and of the rebellious part of the last of it, he having abandoned himself to all sorts of lusts, without regard to the laws of God or man."—"An Account," etc. (Harl. MSS.)

ment by proroguing it, and then obtained from the judicial bench, which he had packed with his creatures, a declaration that the royal dispensation prevailed over the Test Act. He encamped thirteen thousand soldiers at Hounslow as a menace to the citizens of London. Availing himself of his ecclesiastical supremacy, he aimed at Romanizing the Church of England. Seven commissioners were appointed, with the infamous Jeffreys at their head, for the government of the Church (1686); and their first act was to order the Bishop of London to suspend a London vicar who had preached against Popery. When he refused, he himself was suspended. But the action of the commissioners roused the clergy to an heroic resistance; and anti-Roman discourses were thundered from every pulpit. Meanwhile, James turned to attack the universities. At Oxford, the headship of Magdalen College was vacant, and, in 1687, the king recommended to it one Farmer, a man without scholarship and of evil life. The Fellows remonstrated, and when their remonstrance was set aside, elected Mr. Hough as their president. The commissioners arbitrarily pronounced the election void: and James endeavoured to put in a second nominee, Bishop Parker of Oxford, a servile courtier and a concealed papist. The Fellows held firmly to their own appointment. In a burst of rage James hurried to Oxford, summoned the offending Fellows before him, and censured them severely for their disobedience. "I am king," he cried, "and I will be obeyed! Go to your

chapel this instant, and elect the bishop, Let those who refuse look to it, for they shall feel the whole weight of my hand!" The Fellows maintained their bold attitude of opposition; but a royal commission visited the university, expelled Hough as an intruder, forcibly installed Parker in the President's House, and deprived the Fellows of their Fellowships. Parker died within a few weeks of his installation, and the king appointed as his successor Bonaventure Gifford, a Roman Catholic bishop.

From one desperate act James proceeded to another, carried on by the impetus of his own violence. He had dissolved Parliament, and freed himself from every constitutional restraint. He made a Roman Catholic peer First Lord of the Treasury, and another became Lord Privy Seal. The Papal Nuncio was received with ostentatious ceremony at Windsor, and the Jesuit Father Petre admitted to the Privy Council. Still his course was not without interruptions that should have been accepted as warnings. Going openly to Mass, he required the Duke of Norfolk, in virtue of his hereditary right, to carry the Sword of State before him. The duke went no further than the chapel door. "Your father," complained the king, "would have gone further." "Your majesty's father," was the reply, "was the better man, and he would not have gone so far." When the Duke of Somerset was commanded to usher the nuncio into the royal presence, he answered, "I am advised that I cannot obey your majesty without breaking the law." "Do you not know," said the

angry king, "that I am above the law?" "Your majesty may be, but I am not."

Finding the peers and the clergy so resolute in preserving their independence, James attempted to win the Nonconformists, and, in 1687, issued what was called a Declaration of Indulgence, repealing the penal laws against Nonconformists and Catholics, and the acts which imposed a sacramental test as a qualification for office in Church or State. Such a measure of tolerance, under ordinary circumstances, would have been warmly welcomed; but the Nonconformists, or, at least, the main body of them, and their most trusted leaders, refused it when they saw it was intended as a cloak for the encouragement of Romanism, and granted in a violently illegal manner. Baffled in this direction James resolved to summon a new Parliament, with the view of securing a repeal of the Test Act. But such a Parliament must, he knew, be composed of the nominees of the Crown, if it were to do his will; and he soon found that the spirit of resistance was too strong and too general to be pacified by bribes or cowed by threats. With a persistency which, in a better cause, might be termed heroic, he issued, on the 27th of April, 1688, a fresh Declaration of Indulgence, and ordered that it should be read on two successive Sundays in every cathedral and parish church in the kingdom. But almost all the bishops and clergy disregarded the royal command. In only four of the London churches was the declaration read, and in these the congregations quitted their seats and departed at the

opening sentences. Archbishop Sancroft and six of the bishops of his province, the Bishops of Bath and Wells, Chichester, S. Asaph, Bristol, Ely, and Peterborough, met at Lambeth, and signed a protest to the king, couched in calm and moderate language, in which they declined to publish an illegal declaration. "It is a standard of rebellion," exclaimed the king, indignantly; "I did not expect this from some of you," he added, with a momentary sense, perhaps, of the possible consequences of their independent action. His anger increasing, he committed them to the Tower on a charge of libel. Through streets ringing with the shouts of sympathetic thousands they passed to their prison. When they reached its frowning gates, the sentinels fell on their knees and asked their blessing. The soldiers of the garrison loudly drank their healths. From end to end of England rolled a tide of national feeling before which his ministers would fain have had James retrace his steps. But, like a man blindfolded, he hurried on to his doom. Before judges dependent on his favour, and a jury carefully packed, the bishops were brought to trial on the 29th of June; but neither jury nor judges durst provoke the vengeance of the country, and a verdict of "Not guilty," was returned. These two words shook the throne of James II.

The events which followed belong to history. We are concerned with them only so far as they affected Bishop Ken. When James II. abdicated, Ken joined with Archbishop Sancroft in maintaining

that, so long as he lived, the throne could not be declared vacant; but that as he had governed ill, the nation could justly prohibit him from the exercise of government, and entrust it to a regency. He had abandoned the dogma of Passive Obedience, but he still clung to the doctrine of Divine Right. He refused, therefore, as did Sancroft and six others of his brethren, to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary (1689). They were threatened with the deprivation of their sees; but were allowed a year's grace before the sentence was put in force. Queen Mary sent Bishop Burnet, privately to inquire of them, whether, if an act of grace were passed, and the oath dispensed with, they would loyally acknowledge the new government. We must admire their firmness while deploring their want of sagacity, in that even this concession obtained no favourable reception. Bishop Turner having engaged in an intrigue for James II.'s restoration, which was supposed to involve the other bishops, though there is no authentic or satisfactory evidence against Ken, the sentence of deprivation was finally enforced; and Ken withdrew, for conscience' sake, into a life of poverty and obscurity. (A.D. 1691).

We can understand the motives which guided the bishop's action in this matter by referring to the letter he addressed to Bishop Burnet, in reply to the latter's remonstrance. It is dated, "October 5, 1689," and runs as follows:—

"I am obliged to your lordship for the continual concern you express for me, and for the kind

freedom you are pleased to take with me: and though I have already in public fully declared my mind to my diocese concerning the oath, to prevent my being misunderstood; yet, since you seem to expect it of me, I will give such an account, which, if it does not satisfy your lordship, will at least satisfy myself. I dare assure you, I never advised any one to take the oath; though some, who came to talk insidiously with me, may have raised such a report. So far have I been from it, that I never would administer it to any one person whom I was to collate. And, therefore, before the Act took place, I gave a particular commission to my chancellor, who himself did not scruple it; so that he was authorized, not only to institute, but also to collate in my stead. If any came to discourse to me about taking the oath, I usually told them I durst not take it myself. I told them my reasons, if they urged me to it, and were of my own diocese; and then remitted them to their study and prayers, for further direction. 'Tis true, having been scandalized at many persons of our own coat, who for several years together preached up Passive Obedience to a much greater height than ever I did, it being a subject with which I very rarely meddled, and on a sudden, without the least acknowledgment of their past error, preached and acted the quite contrary, I did prepare a pastoral letter which, if I had seen reason to alter my judgment, I thought to have published, at least that part of it on which I laid the greatest stress, to justify my conduct to

my flock. And before I went to London I told some of my friends, that if that proved true [the reported cession of Ireland, by King James, to the King of France] which was affirmed to us with all imaginable assurance (and which I think more proper for discourse than for a letter), it would be an inducement to me to comply; but when I came to town I found it was false; and, without being influenced by any one, or making any words of it, I burnt my paper, and adhered to my former opinion. If this is to be called change of mind, and a change so criminal, that people who are very discerning, and know my own heart better than myself, have pronounced sentence upon me, that there is something else than conscience at the bottom, I am much afraid that some of those who censure me may be chargeable with more notorious changes than that; whether more conscientious or no, God only is the judge. If your lordship gives credit to the many misrepresentations which are made of me, and which I being so used to can easily disregard, you may naturally enough be in pain for me; for to see one of your brethren throwing himself headlong into a wilful deprivation, not only of honour and of income, but of a good conscience also, are particulars out of which may be framed an idea very deplorable. But though I do daily in many things betray great infirmity, I thank God I cannot accuse myself of any insincerity; so that deprivation will not reach my conscience, and I am in no pain at all for myself. I perceive that, after we have been sufficiently

ridiculed, the last mortal stab designed to be given us, is to expose us to the world for men of no conscience; and if God is pleased to permit it, His most holy will be done; though what that particular passion of corrupt nature is which lies at the bottom, and which we gratify in losing all we love, will be hard to determine. God grant such reproaches as these may not revert on the authors. I heartily join with your lordship in your desires for the peace of this Church; and I shall conceive great hopes that God will have compassion on her, if I see that she compassionates and supports her sister of Scotland. I beseech God to make you an instrument to promote that peace and that charity. I myself can only contribute to both, by my prayers and by my deprecations against schism and against sacrilege."

Bidding farewell to the flock so dear to him, Ken retired to Longleat, the hospitable home of his early friend, Thomas Thynne, bearing with him his lute, the small Greek Testament which was his constant companion, the shroud which was to be his last garment, his "sorry horse," for his occasional journeys, and his income of twenty pounds a quarter, the residue of all his fortune. It was with much difficulty that any one was found bold enough to occupy the see from which he had been expelled. The pious Beveridge refused it, after some hesitation; not because he doubted the lawfulness of accepting the appointment from King William, to whom he had already taken the oath, but because he was unwilling to occupy the throne from which

the saintly Ken had been extruded. Finally, at the express command of Queen Mary herself, it was accepted by Dean Kidder of Peterborough, but with great reluctance; and he afterwards said, "I have often repented of my accepting it, and looked on it as a great infelicity." *

Ken's later life presents few incidents that call for notice. In 1696, he was summoned before the Privy Council, on a charge of being concerned in raising subscriptions for the poorer nonjurors. His defence was manly and successful; and he was allowed to return to his usual privacy, where he so conducted himself as fully to merit his identification with Dryden's ideal character (paraphrased from Chaucer) of "The Good Parson":—

"Rich was his soul, though his attire was poor;
(As God had clok'd his own ambassador):
For such, on earth, his bless'd Redeemer bore.
Of sixty years he seem'd; and well might last
To sixty more, but that he liv'd too fast;
Refin'd himself to soul, to curb the sense;
And made almost a sin of abstinence."

Ken's asceticism is noticed by Burnet. Here is another trait that reminds us of the good bishop:—

"For letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky:
And oft, with holy hymns, he charm'd their ears:
(A music more melodious than the spheres)."

*"How singular it is, when we reflect on what Kidder himself says, that he should have perished in a tempest, by the fall of the chimneys, in his palace at Wells, when Ken was almost providentially saved from the same fate in the canon-house of his nephew at Salisbury."—Rev. W. L. Bowles.

His abundant charity seems indicated in the following lines:—

“ Yet of his little he had some to spare,
To feed the famished, and to clothe the bare :
For mortified he was to that degree,
A poorer than himself he would not see
With what he begg'd his brethren he reliev'd ;
And gave the charities himself receiv'd.
Save, which he taught ; and edified the more,
Because he show'd, by proof, 'twas easy to be poor.”

William III. died in 1706 ; and soon after the ascension of Queen Anne, Ken received an offer of restoration to his diocese by the removal of Bishop Kidder to another see. It was in the following year that Kidder met his death, in the episcopal palace at Wells, through the fall of a stack of chimneys during the Great Storm. Ken at the time was staying at his nephew's house at Salisbury, and met with a remarkable deliverance. There, too, the stack of chimneys was thrown down, but the beam which supported the roof broke their descent, so that they damaged nothing but the roof. Writing to Bishop Lloyd, Ken says:—“ I think I omitted to tell you the full of my deliverance in the late storm, for the house being surveyed the day following, the workmen found that the beam which supported the roof over my head was broken out to that degree, that it had but half an inch hold, so that it was a wonder it would hold together ; for which signal and particular preservation God's holy name be ever praised ! ”

Hitherto Ken had considered himself as *de jure* Bishop of Bath and Wells, not acknowledging the

legality of his deprivation. But on Bishop Kidder's death, he formally resigned the mitre, and was well pleased to see it bestowed on his friend Bishop Hooper (of S. Asaph). The Queen Anne, on learning that he would not accept of reinstatement, owing to his increasing bodily infirmities, generously settled on him a pension of £200 a year. From a MS. memorial, by Bishop Hooper's daughter, we gather the following particulars:—

“When Bishop Ken was deprived, the whole of his fortune was but £800, which the then Lord Weymouth took, and was to allow him either £60 or £80 a year for it, I cannot remember which, and he was to make Longleat his home as long as he lived, which he always looked upon as such; but was very frequently at many other places for considerable part of his time, particularly Mrs. Thynne's, at Leweston, Mrs. Keymis', Archdeacon Sandys' and the palace at Wells, who all thought themselves happy to have him under their roof. He was so charitable as to give away more than he could spare, so that his habit was mean, and a poor horse to carry him about, which made Bishop Hooper entreat him that he would not give anything away, which the bishop promised to lay out upon himself for the future, and from that time he appeared in everything according to his condition. Bishop Ken died several years before Bishop Hooper, and, just before he died, would fain have given his servant a message for him, but could not make himself understood, any more than that he mentioned his best friend.”

It was at Longleat, his asylum for many years, and in the 73rd year of his age, that Ken's saintly and guileless soul returned to its Maker. Before the end came, many painful symptoms had appeared; general debility, rheumatic pains, and much difficulty of breathing. These were followed by a fit of apoplexy, which rendered him for a time unconscious. On recovering his senses he calmly attired himself in his shroud, and prepared for death, with the serene courage of a Christian hero. With many prayers, and bestowing his blessing on his sorrowing friends, he passed into his rest between five and six o'clock on the morning of the 19th of March, 1711. He was buried in the churchyard at Frome.

A few words must be added upon Ken's poetry. It was collected and published by Hawkins in four volumes; the first containing "Hymns;" the second, "Edmund: an Epic;" and "Hymnarium, or Hymns on the Attributes of God;" the third, "Hymnothes, the Penitent," and "Anodynes, or Alleviations of Pain;" and the fourth, "Preparatives for Death." These compositions are chiefly surprising as being the work of the author of the "Morning," and "Evening" Hymns. They are in the worst style of the school of Cowley; cumbrous in versification, loaded with grotesque and artificial imagery, and seldom relieved by a happy line or graceful allusion. The story runs that Ken composed his epic, which is divided into fourteen books, to divert the monotonous hours of a sea-voyage. We can but regret that his biographer, Hawkins, ever

gave it to the public. Bowles, who had seen the original manuscript, speaks of it as written with great care, and with unrivalled neatness of penmanship; and adds, that the pains, the *limæ labor et mora*, which were taken in the composition, is obvious from the minute verbal corrections.

It would be unjust not to admit that the four volumes are interspersed with a few efforts worthier of the Bishop's simple taste and unpretending muse. Among these is his sketch (one might suppose that he himself had sat for it) of "The Christian Pastor":—

"Give me the priest these graces shall possess :
Of an ambassador the just address,
A father's tenderness, a shepherd's care,
A leader's courage, which the cross may bear ;
A ruler's awe, a watchman's wakeful eye,
A pilot's skill, the helm in storms to ply ;
A prophet's inspiration from above ;
A teacher's knowledge, and a Saviour's love.

"Of a mild, humble and obliging heart,
Who with his all will to the needy part :
Distrustful of himself, in God confides,
Daily himself among his flock divides ;
Of virtue uniform, and cheerful air,
Fixed meditation, and incessant prayer ;
Who is all that he would have others be,
From wilful sin, though not from frailty, free."

The following lines are touched with pathos :—

"E'er since I hung upon my mother's breast
Thy love, my God, has me sustained and blest :
My virtuous parents, tender of their child ;
My education pious, careful, mild ;

My teachers zealous to well-form my mind ;
My faithful friends and benefactors kind ;
My creditable station and good name ;
My life preserv'd from scandal and from shame ;
My understanding, memory, and health ;
Relations dear, and competence of wealth ;
All the vouchsafements Thou to me hast shown,
All blessings, all deliverances unknown—
Lord, when Thy blessings which all vot'ries share
With my peculiar blessings I compare,
I stand amaz'd at their unbounded store,
And silently Thy liberal love adore."

As for Ken's character, it calls for no analysis. There was no complexity in it; no contrariety or antithesis of elements. It was set forth by his life; and the text and comment were equally intelligible. A man of clear rather than powerful intellect, Ken, having once seen his way, was resolute in keeping to it. His firmness was that of a sound judgment and a courageous heart. From what he conceived to be the truth, no earthly power could separate him. His witness he was ready to give in all places, at all times, and under all circumstances. Hence we discern in him nothing of that change or growth of opinion which is often visible in greater men. He was the same in his study as by the bedside of a king; in the cottager's humble room as in the episcopal palace. His piety was profoundly sincere; and an intelligent and reasonable piety, though of rather too ascetic a type. It was a loving and unaffected piety, yet with a strength to sustain him in severe trials and prompt him to noble deeds, as when he repulsed a king's mistress, and gave up the emoluments

and dignities of the episcopate for conscience' sake. He ruled his diocese strictly, but with the gentleness of a gentle nature; being in all things the father of his clergy, the friend and adviser and shepherd of his laity. As a preacher he was distinguished by his fervour, his plainness, and his boldness of utterance; and some thought him eloquent from the glow of enthusiasm which warmed his language. He was not a great scholar, and his claims to literary eminence rest almost entirely on his two hymns. It is evident enough that he was no statesman. Why is it then, the reader may ask, that in the great gallery of English Churchmen he has always held, and still holds a foremost place? Because, must be the reply, because he lived the saintly life of a true Bishop of Souls—of a servant of Christ, humbly, but faithfully treading in his Master's steps—of a man who acknowledged conscience as the supreme and only guide of his every action. The Christian ideal was so faithfully fulfilled by Ken that even the world could not refuse him the tribute of its reverence and admiration.

[The principal biographies of Ken are those by Hawkins, which is partly founded on the bishop's own statements; W. Lisle Bowles, a wretched production; and "a Layman." The last is exhaustive of the subject.]

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LONDON.





